

Mubarak asks scholars to repudiate extremism

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak Wednesday asked Muslim scholars to define a new vision of Islam which repudiates extremism. Mr. Mubarak made the plea during talks with religious ministers from Muslim Arab, Asian and African countries who are meeting in Cairo to discuss ways to counter a wave of fundamentalism.

President Mubarak asked the scholars to draw a new outlook for Islam that denounces extremism and separates between Islam and terrorism on the basis that religion preaches love and tolerance, not violence and extremism. Mr. Mubarak asked the officials to work to rectify Islam's image in coordination with government, religious and social institutions in their own countries, Mr. Mubarak said. Egypt is already waging a campaign against extremists, who have attacked foreign tourists and Christians recently. The government, accusing them of using mosques to recruit followers and to promote the establishment of an Islamic caliphate, decided in November to bring all mosques under its direct control. It hired moderate scholars, banned secret meetings in mosques and told scholars to give prior notice of their religious lessons.

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His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan outlines his vision of how to protect Muslims in Europe, see page 5

Europe PLO envoys said in hiding

PARIS (R) — Several senior Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) representatives in Europe have gone into hiding after receiving assassination threats, a well-informed Palestinian source in Paris said Wednesday. "French police are aware of the threats made against Ibrahim Soussa, the delegate-general of Palestine in France, and several of his counterparts in other European capitals," the source told Reuters. "They were ordered (by the PLO) to go under cover for a while and the French foreign ministry also advised Mr. Soussa to hide," the source said. French officials confirmed Mr. Soussa had left the country but declined comment on the reasons.

Four killed in Algerian shootout

ALGIERS (R) — A Muslim fundamentalist shot dead two policemen and a third policeman then gunned down both him and his accomplice, police said Wednesday. The four men were killed Tuesday night in Oued Fodda, near the town of Chlef, 170 kilometres southwest of the Algerian capital. The security forces have now killed at least 21 fundamentalists this year. In the same period, at least 10 members of the security forces have been killed.

Kuwaitis win right to own guns

KUWAIT (R) — The Kuwaiti parliament has enshrined in law Kuwaitis' right to own light weapons including automatic rifles. Under the law passed late Tuesday, Kuwaitis may own pistols and automatic rifles subject to personal permission from the interior minister, members said. Member of Parliament Muhsin Jamal said anyone caught with an unlicensed weapon risked five years' imprisonment. He said the law did not alter the legal situation because Kuwaitis already had the same right under a government decree issued soon after Kuwait was liberated in February 1991. There was no parliament at the time.

EC-Israel talks to go ahead

STRASSBOURG, France (R) — The European Community (EC) will not suspend trade cooperation talks with Israel although it deplores the Israeli expulsion of 415 Palestinians to southern Lebanon, EC Commissioner Peter Schmidhuber said. He told the European Parliament the community had made its position against the expulsions clear but that this should not mean changing planned talks on cooperation with Israel. "The commission does not intend to take any economic measures or reconsider its financial arrangements with the state of Israel — firstly because of contractual obligations relating to those agreements and secondly because of the priority we attach to the (Middleast) peace process," Mr. Schmidhuber said.

Naruhito's visit to Mideast delayed

TOKYO (AP) — Crown Prince Naruhito's trip to the Middle East, scheduled to begin Friday, was indefinitely postponed because of renewed tensions in the Gulf, government officials said Wednesday. Chief government spokesman Yohsei Kono told reporters that "the environment for the crown prince to visit these nations to promote friendship has become inappropriate."

Belgian king snubs Iraq at reception

BRUSSELS (R) — Belgian King Baudouin snubbed Iraq's ambassador to Belgium by withdrawing his invitation to a palace reception for diplomats, the ambassador said Wednesday. Zaid Haidar told Reuters he had been informed late last week his presence was no longer required at the new year reception for diplomats held at the palace Tuesday.

All quiet in Iraqi sky

Baghdad gloats over Bush departure, hopes for better ties with Clinton; U.N. accepts offer for flights

Combined agency dispatches

IRAQ OFFERED no challenges Wednesday to U.S. warplanes flying patrols in the "no-fly" zones and appeared to keep a ceasefire pledge in honour of Bill Clinton's inauguration as America's new commander-in-chief as a step towards improved relations.

U.S. planes were reported in the skies over Iraq, but military officials in Washington said there was no fire or provocations directed at American craft.

The Iraqi leadership promised Tuesday to stop shooting at American planes as "a gesture of good will" towards Mr. Clinton, who took office Wednesday.

Baghdad also said it would allow U.N. weapons inspection flights to resume without the conditions that Iraq imposed earlier, angering the United States and other Western governments.

Iraq gloated over the departure of U.S. President George Bush. But Iraqis impoverished by an enduring Security Council trade blockade held out little hope that the world would improve with a new tenant in the White House.

A spokesman for Mr. Clinton took a firm line on an Iraqi offer to open talks on the "no-fly" zones imposed by Washington and its Gulf war allies.

George Stephanopoulos said Washington expected full compliance with United Nations Gulf war ceasefire resolutions.

"What we need to do now is see Iraq change its behaviour," he told reporters.

Iraq insists it is complying fully with U.N. demands.

Iraqi newspapers had little comment on Mr. Clinton but revelled in heaping abuse on Mr. Bush, who orchestrated the multinational coalition that ended Iraq's seven-month occupation of Kuwait in February 1991 and whom Iraqis accuse of carrying out a personal vendetta against their leader.

"Iraq's symbol (Saddam) shines and Bush collapses," trumpeted the army newspaper Al Qadisiyah.

The government daily Al Jumhuriyah advised Mr. Bush to commit suicide to get rid of his obsession with Iraq. Other newspapers hoped God would keep him alive for more punishment.

"The symbol of truth and honour (Saddam) has beaten all phases of Bush's aggressive plans. He inflicted on Bush, who was obsessed with occupation and power, a crushing, all-out defeat," said the ruling Baath Party newspaper Al Thawra.

The minister, who visited Israel Sunday to try to resolve the issue, told his Japanese counterpart Michio Watanabe that Israel's refusal to take the Palestinians back could endanger the whole Middle East peace process, Japanese officials said.

Mr. Musa urged the Iraqi government to abide by U.N. resolutions and called for a balanced approach to the crisis.

"What is important for us ... and we would not cease calling for it, is to respect the sovereignty and integrity of Iraq," he said, adding that violations of resolutions did not necessarily call for the use of force.

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Arab states have criticised the United States, France and Britain for attacking Iraq to ensure compliance with U.N. resolutions but failing to enforce resolutions on Israel and the treatment of Bosnian Muslims.

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Egypt minister warns of double standard over Iraq

TOKYO (Agencies) — Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa, whose country joined the 1991 war to expel Iraq from Kuwait, expressed reservations Wednesday about the latest U.S.-led air strikes.

"We are aware ... that there is a point of view prevailing (throughout the Arab World) that there is a double standard in the treatment of many problems," he told a news conference on the second day of his four-day visit to Japan.

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William Jefferson Clinton is sworn in as the 42nd president of the U.S. Wednesday by Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist. At centre is Hillary Clinton (AFP photo)

Clinton assumes office with call for 'American renewal'

WASHINGTON (AP) — William Jefferson Clinton solemnly swore an oath as the nation's 42nd president Wednesday with a call for a bold "season of American renewal." Tens of thousands gathered in Washington to witness the transfer of power to a new generation of leadership.

"To renew America, we must meet challenges abroad as well as at home," Mr. Clinton said.

"There is no clear division today between what is foreign and what is domestic — the world economy, the world AIDS crisis, the world arms race affect us all," he said.

With a hand resting on a King James Bible given to him by his grandmother, Mr. Clinton pledged to "preserve, protect and defend the constitution."

And by those words — uttered by every incoming president since George Washington — the new Democratic chief executive assumed responsibility for the nation's economic woes, its awesome nuclear arsenal and the management of world trouble spots from Iraq to Bosnia to Somalia.

"There is nothing wrong with America that cannot be cured by what is right with America," Mr. Clinton said in his inaugural remarks.

marks, the climax of a ceremony that blended pomp and poetry. His was the first Democratic administration in a dozen years.

Mr. Clinton's emotions were near the surface as his assumption of power drew close. A tear rolled down his cheek as he sat in a front-row pew at an early morning church service and listened to a soulful rendition of "Holy Ground."

The speech echoed his long campaign for the White House, using the word "change" nine times. "The urgent question of our age is whether we can make change our friend and not our enemy," he said.

Mr. Clinton added, "It is time to break the bad habit of expecting something for nothing, from our government or from each other. Let us take more responsibility, not only for ourselves and our families, but for our communities and our country."

Close by was his wife, Hillary, daughter, Chelsea, and — in a visible display of the orderly transition of power, members of Congress, the Supreme Court and the outgoing and incoming administrations.

The Marine Band signalled the transition, playing "Hail to the Chief" one final time to the outgoing president, George Bush.

shortly before noon, and again to the new president a few minutes after.

Hours before mounding the inaugural stand, Mr. Clinton declared himself prepared for the responsibilities ahead. Asked whether he felt ready, the 46-year-old president-to-be said simply, "I do."

The ceremony began on time with a prayer by the Rev. Billy Graham. Mr. Bush bowed his head. Mr. Clinton, standing a few metres away, did likewise.

In his remarks, Mr. Clinton began with a tribute to his predecessor for his "half century of service to America."

A few moments later, he signalled unmistakably his determination to change the country of the nation.

"We pledge that the era of deadlock and drift is over" — a reference to the past dozen years of divided political power in Washington. "A new season of American renewal has begun."

"It will not be easy," he said. "It will require sacrifice. But it can be done and done fairly, not choosing sacrifice for its own sake, but for our own sake."

The stylised turnover of the office began earlier when Mr.

tended to divert the world's attention from its Dec. 17 expulsion of Palestinians a top Arab League official said.

Assistant Secretary-General Adnan Omran said there was nothing new in the Israeli stand since it was widely known that the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks with Israel was always directed by the PLO.

"What was declared is a confirmation to a de facto situation but Israel announced it with a fanfare to divert the attention and concern (of the world) from the real tragedy ... of the Palestinian expellees who are living in the unknown," Mr. Omran told reporters.

"If Israel is serious and wants to talk peace it should accept all U.N. Security Council resolutions," he added.

Egypt welcomed the Knesset vote and said this will boost the chances for peace in the Middle East.

"Egypt considers this a positive step in the right direction," presidential advisor Osama Al Ez told reporters.

"Widening the scope of the dialogue between Israel and the Palestinian people and their legitimate representatives (PLO) will in the end serve the goal of peace," he added.

In Tunis, another senior PLO official said the legalisation step was "useless" unless Israel agreed to talk directly to the group and allow all the expellees home.

(Continued on page 2)

PLO hails lifting of Israeli ban, urges U.S. to restart dialogue

Combined agency dispatches

THE PALESTINE LIBERATION Organisation (PLO) has welcomed a decision by the Israeli parliament to lift a ban on contacts with the PLO and called on the U.S. to resume a suspended dialogue with the organisation.

PLO spokesman Bassam Abu Sharif described a move passed by a 39-20 vote in the 120-member Knesset to lift the ban as a "correction to a wrong decision" taken by former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's government.

This was a reference to a 1986 amendment to an Israeli law that barred Israel from meeting with the PLO, which Israel considers a "terror" group.

Palestinian delegates, who are not members of the PLO at Israel's insistence, have said they will boycott peace talks within the U.S.-sponsored Middleast peace talks until Israel repatriates more than 400 Palestinians, who were expelled last month to a northern border area with Lebanon.

Mr. Abu Sharif said the Knesset vote was "a new, real and serious step towards establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the region."

"We hope the move will pave the way to set up an independent Palestinian state living side by side with Israel," he added.

Mr. Abu Sharif renewed a call to Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres to meet with PLO officials with a view to preparing

a "summit meeting" between PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Such a step would ensure the implementation of U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 "on the basis of security for all states in the region, including Israel," he added.

A U.S.-PLO dialogue was launched in 1988 after Mr. Arafat renounced terrorism and recognised Israel's right to exist.

But the contacts were frozen 18 months later when Mr. Arafat refused to condemn a May 30, 1989 commando raid mounted by the Palestine Liberation Front on an Israeli beach in which four guerrillas were wounded.

Mr. Abu Sharif said: "There is no reason for the ties between the U.S. and the PLO to remain frozen."

He said he hoped the new U.S. administration "will use a single standard in dealing with Middle East issues, especially on ending Israeli occupation of Arab and Palestinian lands."

"It is an opportunity for Israelis and Palestinians to begin seriously negotiating the application of United Nations resolutions," Mr. Abu Sharif told Radio France International.

"It is also a chance for (U.S.) President (Bill) Clinton to back the principle that the international community should seriously enforce U.N. resolutions," he said.

The Israeli move legalising contacts with the PLO was in-

tended to divert the world's attention from its Dec. 17 expulsion of Palestinians a top Arab League official said.

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(Continued on page 2)

Israeli found killed

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — A Jewish woman was found dead near Tel Aviv Wednesday and alongside her was a note in Arabic vowing to kill Israelis until Israel takes back hundreds of Palestinian expellees, police sources said.

Israeli soldiers also shot and wounded at least 12 Palestinians, including seven under the age of 15, when they clashed with stone-throwing demonstrators in the Gaza Strip Wednesday, international relief workers said.

The Israeli army said it was checking the report.

Iraq gloats over Bush departure

Saad Mahdi Saleh, speaker of Iraq's parliament, expressed his country's "sincere desire to establish constructive relations with the new U.S. administration under Bill Clinton."

Then he said that he hoped Mr. Clinton would take positions different from those of Bush "whose policy caused the launching of an evil aggression against an independence and peace-loving people."

The Iraqi News Agency accused Mr. Bush of "ugly crimes." It said the recent allied attacks

Baghdad, workers dug through the rubble of a machine tool factory destroyed by U.S. cruise missiles on Sunday.

Washington said the plant's European-supplied machinery could be used in Iraq's nuclear weapons programme.

Iraq says the factory made spare parts for cars, tractors and Baghdad's baby milk factory, itself destroyed by a missile in the Gulf war and due to restart production this month.

"We don't know if Clinton will be better — he will have to prove

It was uncertain how long Mr. Clinton would remain free from this Iraqi rhetoric since he has backed Mr. Bush's handling of the dispute and urged Baghdad to adhere to U.N. resolutions.

Also, the United States already

The attack on the factory brought the first criticism of Washington by a key ally.

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali, meanwhile, asked the Security Council to send 3,650 armed U.N. peacekeepers to reinforce 353 observers monitoring the demilitarized zone along Kuwait's border.

The United Nations said it would take up an Iraqi offer to allow resumption of flights carrying weapons inspectors and other staff into Baghdad. French UN ambassador Jean Francois Yver said the crisis was over.

There were no events planned in Baghdad to mark the changeover at the White House.

Many Iraqis went about their day with the same concerns that have occupied them since U.N. sanctions were imposed after the invasion of Kuwait — skyrocketing prices for food and medicine.

The Arab League would remain neutral in the conflict, but would support the UN position.

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On the southern outskirts of

French blast splits

Without revealing its sources, the weekly said Washington initially proposed a joint raid on 12 different targets around Iraq Sunday.

PLO hails lifting of Israeli ban

(Continued from page 1)

PLO Executive Committee member Yasser Abed Rabbo told Reuters.

"This step will be useless if it is not followed by an official dialogue between the Israeli government and the PLO."

Israel must also "show its good intentions by cancelling the expulsion order and allowing the (expelles) back home," he added.

Hanan Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, said the Israeli

negotiations order to a moderate talks.

A recent nearly half favour direct including talks. Many from PLO.

However, staunchly arguing that

decision would "go a long way toward creating a better understanding of the PLO ... and improving chances for peace." The Israeli cabinet, however, said Abie Nathan said he was planning to fly to Tunis to meet with Mr. Arafat to ask him for a conciliatory posture toward Israel.

"This is a very serious step we took, and I hope he (Arafat) will do something in return to maintain the momentum," Mr. Nathan told Israeli reporters.

There have been growing calls by Israeli liberals to open direct

07:15	Seems (RJ)	06:00	other Flight
07:45	Siemens (RJ)	06:15	
08:15	Cairo, Angola (RJ)	06:30	
08:30	New Delhi (RJ)	06:45	
08:45	Beirut (RJ)	07:00	
08:50	Colombo (RJ)	07:15	
17:00	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)	07:30	
18:00	Alm Dhar (RJ)	07:45	
18:25	London, Beirut (RJ)	08:00	
19:30	Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)	08:15	
20:30	Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)	08:30	
20:45	Rome (RJ)	08:45	
20:50	Athens, Larnaca (RJ)	09:00	

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

Upcoming
Apple

12:40	Muscat, Abu Dhabi (GF)	Strawberry
12:40	Riyadh (RJ)	Strawberry
12:40	Beirut (RJ)	Strawberry
17:00	Kuala Lumpur (RJ)	Strawberry
17:00	Dubai (EA)	Chickadee
20:00	Cairo (MS)	Canary
21:30	Larnaca (CY)	Cardinal
DEPARTURES		
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights		
(Terminal 1)		
06:15	Beirut (RJ)	Loon
11:00	Rome (RJ)	Loon
11:00	Abu Dhabi (RJ)	Loon
11:15	Amsterdam, Toronto (RJ)	Loon
12:15	London, Athens (RJ)	Loon
12:30	Paris (RJ)	Loon
12:30	London (RJ)	Loon
20:30	Jeddah (RJ)	Loon
20:30	Sabana Doria (RJ)	Loon
20:45	Dubai (RJ)	Loon
21:00	Dubai, Moscow (RJ)	Loon
21:00	Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)	Loon

Country	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
Japan	7	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26
France	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Germany	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Italy	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Spain	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Sweden	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
United Kingdom	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
United States	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Canada	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Australia	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
South Africa	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
India	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
China	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Indonesia	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Philippines	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Thailand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Malaysia	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Singapore	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
South Korea	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Taiwan	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Hong Kong	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
China (incl. HK)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
India (incl. HK)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Indonesia (incl. HK)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Philippines (incl. HK)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Thailand (incl. HK)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Malaysia (incl. HK)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Singapore (incl. HK)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
South Korea (incl. HK)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Taiwan (incl. HK)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Hong Kong (incl. HK)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

07:15	Seems (RJ)	
07:45	Siemens (RJ)	
08:15	Cairo, Angola (RJ)	
09:30	New Delhi (RJ)	
10:15	Beirut (RJ)	
10:30	Colombo (RJ)	
17:30	New York, Amsterdam (RJ)	
18:45	Abu Dhabi (RJ)	
17:25	London, Beirut (RJ)	
19:10	Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)	
20:30	Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)	
20:45	Rome (RJ)	
20:50	Athens, Larnaca (RJ)	
		other Flights
		06:00
		08:15
		12:15
		13:45
		17:30
		20:25

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

Upcoming
Apple

12:40	Muscat, Abu Dhabi (GF)	Strawberry
12:40	Riyadh (RJ)	Strawberry
12:40	Beirut (RJ)	Strawberry
17:00	Kuala Lumpur (RJ)	Strawberry
17:00	Dubai (EA)	Chickadee
20:00	Cairo (MS)	Canary
21:00	Larnaca (CY)	Cardinal
DEPARTURES		
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights		
(Terminal 1)		
06:15	Beirut (RJ)	Loon
11:00	Rome (RJ)	Loon
11:00	Abu Dhabi (RJ)	Loon
11:15	Amsterdam, Toronto (RJ)	Loon
11:15	London, Athens (RJ)	Loon
12:00	Paris (RJ)	Loon
12:10	London (RJ)	Loon
20:30	Jeddah (RJ)	Loon
20:30	Sabana Doria (RJ)	Loon
20:45	Dubai (RJ)	Loon
21:00	Dubai, Moscow (RJ)	Loon
21:00	Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)	Loon

Country	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
Japan	7	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26
France	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Germany	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Italy	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Spain	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Sweden	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
United Kingdom	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
United States	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Canada	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Australia	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
South Africa	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
India	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
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مكتبة الامم

Home News

JORDAN TIMES, THURSDAY-FRIDAY, JANUARY 21-22, 1993 3

Iraqi dinar recovers, but demand is low

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Iraqi dinar is slowly bouncing back to the levels in the Jordanian market prior to the latest flare-up between Baghdad and the U.S.-led coalition, but demand for the embattled currency has almost dried up, according to traders in the local market.

The Iraqi dinar, officially valued at \$3.10, was being traded at 31 fils for "original" notes and 22 fils for "dented" notes at the close of business Tuesday, they said.

This compares with an all-time low of 26 fils and 16 fils respectively on Sunday, at the height of allied attacks on Iraq and high uncertainty over the fate of the government of Saddam Hussein in Baghdad.

However, the currency continues to be traded at between three and four cents in Baghdad, where it is a crime, punishable under law, to distinguish between the "original" and "dented" banknotes, travellers said.

"Originals" mean old notes printed before the eruption of the Gulf crisis with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990; those printed by the Iraqi government since then — the bulk of them on crude presses and photocopiers — are of bad quality and hence

termed "dented."

"The allied air strikes on Iraq plunged the dinar to a record low last week," said a prominent dealer in Amman. "Apparently the conflict appeared more serious than ever, what with the perception that (U.S. President George) Bush could be trying to ensure that Saddam does not remain in power when he (Bush) himself would not be, in a few days' time."

The dinar "is slowly recovering now," said the dealer. But, he added, the demand for the currency "is limited to travellers to Iraq."

Most of the Iraqi dinars changing hands now in Jordan are the "dented" notes, banks, as well as private dealers, said.

"There is only a limited quantity of the originals available in Jordan these days after billions have been shipped to the Gulf states in the past two years," said one moneychanger.

He explained that the old Iraqi banknotes had a high speculative attraction among Gulf investors, Kuwaitis prominent among them, since its exchange value is highly fluctuating and dependent on the ups and downs in the lingering crisis.

"They don't want the dented ones, and there is no market for such notes in the Gulf," said the dealer.

Another, and perhaps more significant reason behind the high demand for the "originals" in the Gulf market was a drive by Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to hoard the old Iraqi banknotes with a view to enhancing the circulation of the "dented" notes and counterfeits.

At the same time, they could also flood the market with the "originals" at any given point and thus pull the rug from under the feet of Iraqi efforts to stabilise their currency, experts said.

"If the Gulf states could spend tens of billions of dollars to pay for the liberation of Kuwait, they could also very well spend a little more to undermine the Iraqi economy," said a senior official at a commercial bank which operates exchange houses.

"It is not a dead investment either," he said. "The hoarders could easily bring back the booty into the market once their main political objective is achieved — the ouster of Saddam Hussein."

The Iraqi government has repeatedly accused Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states, including Iran, as well as the United States, of printing counterfeit Iraqi dinars and circulating them inside Iraq in a bid to undermine the Iraqi economy.

But the existence of the bad quality "dented" notes, which

Baghdad printed in a frantic bid to pay government salaries and keep the civil servants satisfied after the Gulf war in 1991, has weakened the argument.

Several hundred million Iraqi dinars were printed in Britain and ready for shipment to Baghdad at the time of the invasion of Kuwait. But the British government has repeatedly rejected Iraqi requests for the currency to be shipped, saying such action would be in violation of the international sanctions imposed against Iraq.

The "original" Iraqi dinars were a favourite with Kuwaiti speculators until two months ago, with millions of dinars changing hands every day. The flipping came to an end with a ruling by the Central Bank of Kuwait (CBK) to ban trading in Iraqi dinars in the emirate.

The main buyers of Iraqi dinars were moneychangers in Dubai, who used to forward the currency to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. After the CBK ruling, they are no longer buying the currency, Amman moneychangers said.

The Iraqi dinar used to fetch up to 700 fils in the Jordanian market in the early 1980s, at the beginning of the Iran-Iraq war. By the time the war ended in August 1988, the currency had plummeted to around 250 fils. Immediately prior to the Iraqi

invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, the Iraqi currency was being traded at around 190 fils in Jordan, the only country where the dinar could be freely exchanged.

The dramatic fluctuations in the exchange value of the dinar are blamed by the Iraqi government for the soaring cost of living in Iraq.

A concerted government campaign, launched in September last year to tighten the situation, was successful only in the short-term, Iraqi businessmen said.

"There are too many people who make money out of playing with the dinar and it is highly difficult for anyone to put any controls on them," said an Iraqi businessman based in Jordan.

According to the businessman and other Iraqi sources, the actions adopted by the government in a bid to control the circulation of moneychangers after raids on their premises, seizure of currency, and stricter inspection at border posts to check currency smuggling.

"It was like closing the stable after the horse had bolted," said the Iraqi businessman in Amman. "Billions of Iraqi dinars already flowed out of the country and the authorities could only check the smuggling of a few million with their new measures."

Palestinian group to visit Clinton team — Hussein

AMMAN (Petra) — Palestinian-Americans are planning for a visit by a Palestinian delegation to Washington for talks with President Bill Clinton's administration over obstacles in the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations, according to a senior Palestinian official in Amman Wednesday.

Faisal al Hussein, head of the steering committee for the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, said Palestinians want to discuss Israeli-created impediments to the negotiations.

Speaking in Amman before his departure for Tunis, Mr. Hussein said the Palestinian delegation is determined not to return to the negotiating table unless U.N. Security Council Resolution 799, which calls for the immediate return of the 413 exiled Palestinians, is implemented.

Mr. Hussein said the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) wants to maintain contacts with



Faisal Hussein

all concerned parties in order to remove obstacles to the peace process, adding that he believes Mr. Clinton's Middle East policy differs little from his predecessor's.

He said a Palestinian group will meet new U.S. administration

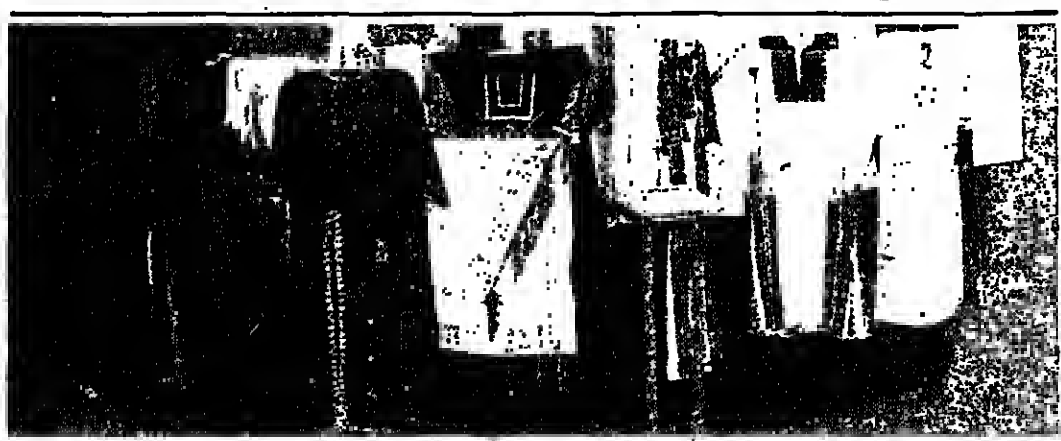
officials in Washington to convey their views regarding the peace talks, and urge the U.S. to force Israel into implementing U.N. resolutions.

Contacts with the new U.S. administration are important at this stage, in view of Israel's escalation of repressive measures in the occupied territories, Mr. Hussein said.

Mr. Hussein said the intifada was bound to escalate unless Israel complies with the U.N. resolutions.

Referring to the interim self-government arrangements, Mr. Hussein said special provisions for recruiting and training a police force are underway in coordination with a number of Arab and other nations.

Mr. Hussein, plans to meet with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat to discuss new developments in the Palestinian arena before returning to Jerusalem.



Rare Jordanian and Palestinian dresses from Widad Ka'war's collection were displayed around the world over six years

Ka'war collection comes home

By Hind-Lara Mango Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Some 550 pieces of traditional costumes, head dresses and silver jewellery, returned to Jordan this month after an absence of six years.

On loan from the collection of Widad Ka'war of Amman, the items were displayed, with the help of the Minister of Tourism, in Cologne, Paris, Munich, Vancouver, Berlin and Liverpool, as well as in Japan, Singapore, Denmark, Sweden and Iceland.

To create an oriental atmosphere in each display, accessories such as embroidered cushions, rugs, pottery and brass were used in building local scenes typical of Jordan and Palestine.

Each exhibit was made unique to the host country by highlighting different aspects of Jordanian and Palestinian heritage.

In Cologne for example, rural kitchens were the point of focus. Architect Amar Khamash set up a typical rural Jordanian kitchen in the central hall of the Joest Museum.

In Berlin the concentration was on traditional dresses, which

were suspended by nylon threads from the ceiling and surrounded by scenes of an Arab souq.

Mr. Khamash was responsible for reproducing the image of an old road from downtown for the Munich exhibit. It was comprised of various compartments depicting, for instance, a room from a rural village, and another of an old urban building.

The most abstract representation was staged in Iceland: Dresses with certain embroidered patterns were chosen to make a specific composition.

"Even though no anthropology was reflected, the show in Iceland was very symbolic," said Mrs. Ka'war.

Attendance at all these shows was excellent. Rather than an expected 300, 600 people appeared at the Cologne show.

In Paris the French and Arab communities attended; unlike the opening days in Munich where, according to Mrs. Ka'war, few Arab expatriates showed up.

Mrs. Ka'war feels that the exhibitions helped in improving the West's understanding of Jordanian and Palestinian culture. "There are not many shows

abroad about our culture, so people were very curious to see what we had to offer," Mrs. Ka'war said.

In some displays the scenes told stories.

Organiser of the Paris show Jean Hannoyer chose to concentrate on rural woman of Jordan and Palestine.

His aim was to tell the story of these two countries via the women's dresses and their history.

Individual rooms were decorated in the traditional manner, each portraying one dimension of the woman's life.

"The room that housed the costumes was spectacular," said Mr. Hannoyer, since high-tech lights were used in focusing on certain patches of embroidery in each of the 300 dresses.

Utensils were supplied by the Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology of Yarmouk University.

Detailed catalogues, which included information and photographs on the geography, typography and history of Jordan and Palestine, accompanied the exhibits.

Italians to deliver goods to needy

AMMAN (J.T.) — A plane-load of food, medical supplies and clothing, a gift from the Italian people to Jordan, is due to arrive in Amman Thursday.

The shipment will be delivered by the head of an Italian peace group, Mr. Ernesto Oliviero, who has previously embarked on similar missions to the Kingdom and was awarded the Jordanian Al Kawkab Medal of the First

Order by His Majesty King Hussein in recognition of his humanitarian efforts.

Mr. Oliviero started his humanitarian trips to Jordan following the Gulf war in an effort to ease the difficulties of the needy.

Italian ambassador to Jordan Romualdo Bettini will host a reception on Thursday to honour Mr. Oliviero.

Salti resigns as AUB deputy president

BEIRUT (AP) — The deputy president of the American University of Beirut (AUB), Jordanian Ibrahim Salti, has resigned, the university said Wednesday, as a financial scandal rocked the most prestigious college in the Middle East.

An AUB statement released Wednesday said President Fredric P. Herter, who is based in New York, accepted the resignation of Dr. Salti.

Mr. Herter, who met recently with Dr. Salti and other AUB faculty members in Damascus, appointed economics professor Samir Makdissi as acting deputy president until new elections for AUB trustees are held in March.

Dr. Makdissi, a former economy minister in the Lebanese government, will take his new AUB post Feb. 1. Dr. Salti will return to serve at the AUB medical faculty, the statement said.

Mr. Herter spoke of a "discretionary fund external to the university from which selected faculty members received financial help."

AUB sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the "slush fund" was used by prominent physician Najib Abu Haidar, allegedly with Dr. Salti's knowledge.

Dr. Abu Haidar, who raised the money in the university's name from friends and wealthy relatives, distributed it to selected faculty members allegedly with Salti's knowledge but neither of the two men consulted with Herter or the board of trustees about the fund or the choice of recipients.

Dr. Abu Haidar said the funds were given to needy medical faculty members hard-hit by the collapse of the Lebanese pound towards the end of Lebanon's 1975-1990 civil war.

"When the existence of the secret fund was revealed, other faculty members were angered," Mr. Abu Haidar said, adding that the extra payments were designed to keep recipients at AUB at a time when the university was under almost daily shell fire.

The New York-chartered university has for generations educated the Arab World's elite, producing three presidents, 10 prime ministers and more than 100 cabinet ministers and ambassadors.

Also among its alumni are Palestinian leaders such as George Habash of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

Many of the 80 red-proofed stone buildings around the rambling 73-acre campus of tree-lined gardens and terraces overlooking the Mediterranean were hit by shell fire during the civil war.

The university, the first to introduce American education to the Middle East, was founded in 1866 as the Syrian Protestant College by Daniel Bliss, a Vermont missionary. The name was changed in 1920.

Bliss' grandson, AUB President David Dodge, became the first of many Western kidnap victims in 1982.

ESCWA holds seminar on transport system

AMMAN (J.T.) — The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) will hold an expert group meeting on training in multimodal transport on Jan. 23 and 24 at ESCWA headquarters in Amman.

Officials from member countries attending this meeting will be familiarised with legal and commercial aspects of multimodal transport, enabling them to introduce the system in their countries.

Multimodal transport based on modern technology, especially containerisation, has been established in trade between developed countries and is now spreading to developing countries.

Dr. H. Carl, chief of the Multimodal Transport and Technological Development Section at UNCTAD will direct the workshop.

IPA reports 2nd stage of administrative reforms

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Institute of Public Administration (IPA) said Wednesday the government has embarked on the second stage of its public administration reform programme.

IPA Director General Zuhair Abu Bakar said the programme, started last year with \$750,000 in financing plus experts and equipment from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), aims at simplifying routine work and increasing coordination among government offices, as mandated by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shakar.

The first stage entailed research and surveys to identify problem areas, and the second stage involves practical application of improved procedures, said Dr. Abu Bakar. The government will assess the results of this practical stage upon completion within four months.

To implement the programme, Dr. Abu Bakar said, government departments were grouped into four categories: finance and economy; transport, public works and communications; energy and agriculture; and social services and health.

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HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King receives greetings

AMMAN (J.T.) — On the occasion of the Al Israa Wal Mi'raj, His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday received cables of good wishes from various heads of public and private organisations. Cables came from the prime minister, speakers of Parliament, and tribal leaders. A cable of good wishes also came from Palestine President Yasser Arafat.

Sheikh Issa greets Abdul Salam Majali

MANAMA, Bahrain (Petra) — The emir of Bahrain, Sheikh Issa Ebn Salman, received Monday the head of the Jordanian delegation to the Middle East peace talks, Abdul Salam Al Majali. The Qatari News Agency said the meeting reviewed the latest developments in the Arab arena and Jordanian-Bahraini relations. Dr. Majali is currently in Bahrain to attend a meeting by the Board of Trustees of the Gulf University.

JNMB announces lecture series

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordanian National Medical Board (JNMB) announced Wednesday it will organise a series of lectures on medical issues beginning Jan. 27. The lectures, which will last two weeks at Al Bashir Hospital in Amman, will be attended by doctors sitting for the board examination.

JEA donates JD 4,000 to help Iraq

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordanian Engineers Association (JEA) Wednesday announced it was contributing JD 3,000 towards the reconstruction of the Iraqi engineering industrial plant which was raided by U.S. planes last Sunday. (JEA) President Husni Abu Gheida said JEA will contribute another JD 1,000 towards nation-wide fund-raising campaign to support Iraqi children. Mr. Abu Gheida urged Jordanian public and private institutions to extend all possible help to the Iraqi people during these difficult times.

Schools to issue road safety tips

AMMAN (J.T.) — When schools re-open Saturday students will receive road safety booklets published by the Royal Automobile Club of Jordan (RACJ). More than 50,000 illustrated booklets will be distributed to government and private schools in the Greater Amman area in a campaign to educate children on street safety precautions.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- Exhibition entitled "Latin American Countries in France" at the French Cultural Centre.
- Exhibition entitled "Modernist Still Life Photographed" at the American Centre.

FIELD TRIP

- Field trip on Friday by the Friends of Archaeology to Al Qwasimieh and Qasr Al Nweijis in the Amman area. Departure will be at 9 a.m. in private cars from the Amra Hotel parking lot.

FILMS

- French-German film evening at the French Cultural Centre at 8 p.m., held to mark the 30th anniversary of the friendship treaty between France and Germany. The following films will be shown in the evening: A documentary on the development of French-German relations and a feature film entitled "Jules et Jim" a French-German coproduction.
- Christ Estwood's film "Pale Rider" at the American Centre, 5 p.m. (11:30 a.m. rated R).

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Noor Al Hussein Foundation
The National Music Conservatory

January 1993 Programme

January 20, 21, 24, 25 and 27
from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.
A CONCISE HISTORY OF WESTERN MUSIC
A series of five lectures presented by Professor Robert Curry (The lectures include extensive audio musical examples).

Place: The National Music Conservatory
Registration Fee: JD 15.

Saturday, 23 January 1993 - 8:00 p.m.
PIANO RECITAL
Under the Patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein, Ammar Ali Hachicho, a young Arab concert pianist living between Bonn and Moscow, will perform a very colorful and enjoyable program. The program includes pieces by: Bach, Beethoven, Bartok, Tchaikovsky and Liszt.

Place: The Royal Cultural Centre Main Theatre.
Ticket Price: JD 7.

Co-sponsored by Lufthansa and Jiries Rihani and Sons Company

Tuesday, 26 January 1993 - 8:00 p.m.
VIOLIN AND PIANO RECITAL
Aram Zarasian, concert violinist in residence at the National Music Conservatory, meets Australian concert pianist Robert Curry in an exciting recital. They will be performing pieces by: Beethoven, Liszt, Wieniawski, Stravinsky and others.

Place: The Royal Cultural Centre Main Theatre.
Ticket Price: JD 7.

Co-sponsored by the Australian Embassy in Jordan

Saturday, 30 January 1993 - 8:00 p.m.
LUTE RECITAL
Bill Badley, British lutenist, will take the audience on a musical trip back to the golden days of this instrument. The lute is considered the successor of the oud and the precursor of the guitar.

Place: The Royal Cultural Centre Studio Theatre.
Ticket Price: JD 5.

Co-sponsored by the British Council

Attend all four activities for JD 27.
The National Music Conservatory, tel. 687620

Jordan Times

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Clinton's new era

BY ANY standard, the inauguration of William Jefferson Clinton as the 42nd president of the United States Wednesday ushers in a new era in American politics. Bill Clinton represents a new generation of Americans whose views of the world have been shaped by forces, values and social trends different from the ones that moulded the characters and policies of his predecessors. Besides, he assumes power at a time when the world is offering new promises and challenges to everybody.

Change is the platform upon which the new president was elected and change is the signature of the era at which he takes his responsibility as leader of the strongest country on earth. And change is what we hope for, but not necessarily expect, in Clinton's foreign policy towards the Middle East.

Like probably all previous occupants of the Oval Office, Clinton enters the White House expecting to bring about at least new emphasis and themes in American foreign policy. But rarely has any American president succeeded in introducing revolutionary departures from the established policy direction. As Joseph A. Califano, a member of the Carter cabinet, put it, "a president is a prisoner of historical forces that will demand his attention whatever his preference in objectives. Every president is a victim as well as a moulder of events." American history has so far shown that a president's ability to change foreign policy has been constrained by powerful circumstances that promote constancy and inhibit dramatic policy adjustments.

But even though the particular beliefs of American presidents have often given way to forces of conventional wisdom, they have occasionally allowed for fluidity and evolution. That said, our hope that Clinton will escape the fetters of the past is not based on mere optimism but on our own perceptions of his declared objectives and the circumstances that surround his inauguration.

Sea changes across the globe have introduced new rules to international politics: The cold war is over and the nuclear menace may be receding; the interconnectedness of the world system has never been more tangible and the need for world cooperation in the face of common threats has never been more urgent.

"America will continue to lead the world," the new president declared to billions of people who watched his inaugural ceremony Wednesday. By virtue of its power, economic might and technological edge, the U.S. will indeed lead the world for some time to come. But America can lead through cooperation and concern for common interests and not through force and coercion. This should be easier for Clinton to do since he is championing the cause of democracy, liberty and freedom, and since, unlike his predecessor, he seems more eager and committed to back all peoples' quests for their fundamental human rights.

If Clinton is true to his words, the Palestinians should expect support from the new American administration in obtaining their freedom and right to self-determination, thousands of Bosnians should expect an end to their slaughter, and a defiant Israeli government should expect some American pressure over its defiance of U.N. resolutions and international law.

"Our hopes, our hearts and our hands are with those on every continent who are building democracy and freedom," Clinton declared yesterday. And it is in this light that we in Jordan should prepare for a new era of cooperation with and understanding from the United States.

Not many countries in the Middle East can boast of a better record than ours on human rights, public freedoms, openness and political stability.

So, we think we have a right to be optimistic that the new administration's thinking will meet ours at one point. It might be extremely difficult to open a new page and expect positive results right away. But it is an endeavour that has to be explored.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

MILLIONS OF people around the world do hope that the exit of President Bush from the White House Wednesday would mark the advent of a new era in U.S. Arab relations and a respite for the world from aggression, said Al Rai Arabic daily. Millions of people around the world hope that with the exit of Mr. Bush, the United States would embark on a new era in which it can shoulder its responsibilities towards real stability and security in all parts of the world, the paper added. The hope that the downfall of Mr. Bush, upon the decision of the American people, would mark the end of the end of enmity harboured by many nations towards the United States for its racist wars and aggression, the paper continued. For us, in the Arab world, the downfall of Mr. Bush represents a victory for the Arab Nation's strong will, despite the fact that the downfall came as a directed result of the U.S. decision, the paper said. It said that the ouster of Mr. Bush could mark a new beginning, of improved American economy, and a better standard of living for millions of Americans made poor by Mr. Bush's aggressive attitude and neglect of public interest. The paper said that Mr. Bush succeeded in presenting the American people as a nation of murderers, bent on killing other nations and destroying their future. The crimes committed by Mr. Bush against the Arabs it said, will remain alive in the memories of the Arab people who also remember Arab traitors who offered service to the enemies of the Arab Nation.

SAWT AL SHAAB daily expressed hope that President Clinton will respond positively and favourably to an Iraqi initiative to stop the war. The latest rocket and cluster bomb shelling of residential areas in Iraq, said the paper, have triggered a world-wide condemnation of the American president and his policies and caused deeper hatred for the American people. King Hussein has voiced the Arab Nation's feelings when he said that the latest act of aggression caused real anger in his heart and those of the Arab masses, said the daily. Indeed, the acts of aggression on Iraq have caused the loss of innocent lives and brought about vast destruction; and above all, it was in violation of U.N. Security Council decisions, said the daily.

The View from Fourth Circle

Eagles, turkeys, presidents and the Mideast

By Rami G. Khouri

The multiple coincidence of the second anniversary of the start of the Gulf war, the resumption of U.S.-led bombing of Iraq, and the transition from the Bush to the Clinton presidency provides a valuable opportunity to assess some of the forces at play in this region and to ask whether the future may hold some hope for a more rational approach to our many problems.

The resumption of the U.S.-led bombing of Iraq will probably confirm the basic point that I and many others around here tried to make when the Gulf crisis erupted in August 1990: That militarism, especially on the part of the U.S., the U.K., and France — the Mideast's traditional western neo-colonial powers — is not the answer to our problems, but rather is a major cause of the problem itself. The militarism of Iraq against Kuwait, of course, is also part of this same failed equation, but I first stress the inappropriate militarism of the West because it remains the root historical cause of most of our contemporary ills.

It should be distressing for those who approve of the militaristic Bush policy towards Iraq to survey the region today just as the militarism is renewed, because the region today is far more unstable, troubled, and tense than it was two years ago. Most of the official and unofficial objectives of the U.S.-led coalition two years ago have not been met, most of the problems of the region have been aggravated, and some new problems have been created that did not exist — largely due to the Pavlovian western resort to militarism as the preferred option for dealing with the Arabs and the Middle East.

Of course, the 1991 war removed Iraq from Kuwait, but that was the easy part given the enormous military and technological superiority of the anti-Iraq forces. It was, as American troops themselves described it, "a turkey shoot." The greater question that is now raised by the resumption of the bombardment of Iraq is: Who are the real turkeys? The Arabs getting killed or the Americans and their European sidekicks doing the killing?

I am prompted to ask this question by the reality of the region today compared to two years ago. The Middle East today is characterised by the following facts, which all of Colin Powell's maps, George Bush's false rhetoric, and John Major's London fog morality cannot hide:

— Iraq has been evicted from Kuwait, but the spirit of Iraqi defiance of western guns, death diplomacy, and gutter morality is stronger now than it was two years ago;

— grassroots Arab and Islamic sentiment with the Iraqi people and their leadership's defiance of the West is stronger today than it was two years ago, while many Arab governments that joined the cash register coalition are now nervously watching the renewed militarism with great unease, aware that the vast majority of their people probably do not support them;

— Kuwait is free, but the United States just sent back over one-thousand soldiers and a Patriot missile battery to protect Kuwait from a feared Iraqi attack — yet, we thought the United States dealt with the Iraqi military threat to Kuwait two years ago. Did we understand wrong? Or did the United States and its sidekicks perhaps kill a largely imaginary threat in the Gulf war — the threat of Iraq's armed forces — while not touching the real source of its anger, which is the spirit of Arab defiance borne of a revision of western militarism and the ills it has spawned in the last two centuries? Did the United States kill the wrong turkey in 1991?

— the policies of Islamic activism and defiance throughout the region are much stronger today than they were two years ago. A majority of Algerians voted for Islamist parliamentary candidates in the 1991 elections and were subsequently subjected to a military coup, while other fellow Islamists have been severely suppressed in other North African countries. This merely increases the domestic pressure on political systems barely held together by brute military force. Such systems cannot last very long;

— Egypt, a lynchpin of the cash register coalition's junk morality, is in deep trouble, with its government having recently sent nearly 20,000 soldiers into Cairo slum neighbourhoods to chase after the same elusive ghosts that the coalition tried to kill in

the Gulf war. It, too, failed in its objectives, for the simple reason that the enemy is not a gun that can be destroyed or a person that can be locked up. The enemy is a spirit of fearless defiance emanating from the blooded and beaten soul of an ancient but humiliated Arab/Islamic identity — an identity that can be hit but not killed, and that can be temporarily suppressed but never totally dissipated;

— Sudan is in the grip of a novel Islamist/military ruling combine that has drawn the wrath of the West and its Middle Eastern ruler-surrogates, but that elicits a peculiar and tolerant curiosity from much of the indigenous people of the region. It is viewed as a terroristic and inhuman aberration by the West, but as a possible harbinger of things to come by many Middle Eastern natives;

— Iran has emerged as a stronger regional power today than it was two years ago, and it continues to arm itself and to extend its political/religious influence in Africa and central Asia;

— the Arab Gulf states are more militarised, more scared, more fragile, more insecure, more in debt and more dependent on the West today than they were two years ago. Some Gulf states also face more daring calls for reform from conservative Islamists as well as from more liberal, educated young people;

— the Kurds are more militarised, more scared, more fragile, more insecure, more dependent on the West, more volatile in Turkey, and more certain to be dropped soon like a hot potato by the West than they were two years ago;

"Western militarism cannot solve our key Middle Eastern problems of pan-Arab fragmentation, social disequilibrium, domestic political autocracy, economic stagnation, income disparity, exaggerated militarism and resource depletion."

— the Palestinians and the other Arabs in the peace talks with Israel are firmly sticking to their basic negotiating demands and are far less willing to make diplomatic concessions today than they were two years ago. At the same time, the Palestinian intifada continues unabated, some Palestinians are adopting violence as a routine tactic and the strength of the Hamas faction in Palestine is on the increase;

— the Russian leadership is starting to react to the shame of being put in the same degrading diplomatic basket that is home to the British, the French and other European powers that dance furiously, if awkwardly, to Washington's violent tunes. Russia and China have both questioned this round of violence and will do so in stronger terms in every future round, while the dancers look increasingly foolish and the player of the violent tunes looks increasingly pathetic;

— the continued American-led western dynamism in implementing U.N. resolutions in the Gulf is sharpening the contrast with American-led western lassitude and nonchalance in implementing other equally valid and unanimous U.N. resolutions related to the rights of Arabs in Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and other places. This is heightening global awareness and resentment of American-led western double standards, which lowers the capacity of the United States to play a credible diplomatic role in some other key conflicts;

— by association, and because of obvious U.S. manipulation of the United Nations and its Security Council apparatus, the U.N. itself is now subjected to a great deal of scepticism around the world, in contrast to the hope and optimism that it generated in many quarters of our world two years ago;

— the fiction of good, obedient, tamed, almost white-py coalition Arabs working together to protect the Arab oil in the

Gulf that powers all night hot dog stands in Milwaukee and peep show parlors in London has been shown to be just that — fiction. The United States and its violence-prone North Atlantic pals appear badly caught in a long-term commitment to protect assorted Arab rulers and regimes — a commitment that is no more likely to succeed than did the parallel Soviet experience in Afghanistan or American experience in Vietnam. The only difference here is that the West makes a bit of money — over \$15 billion in the last two years — selling arms and industrial equipment to its Arab protectors. It's good business, and always has been, but it's untenable, and always has been;

— when Kuwait held a general election in October, a majority of the victorious MPs were opposition candidates who ran on political platforms that opposed the predominant government ideologies and policies. The old ways, and the old power structures, cannot hold for much longer, neither in the Gulf nor in any other part of the Middle East.

Enough, or do I need to continue the list of our regional realities today in contrast with the imaginary consequences that the U.S.-led coalition expected would emanate from its militarism in the Gulf two years ago? The frantic and sustained western bombing of Iraq is pitiful because it has no more chance of succeeding in addressing the root problems of the Middle East than did the Gulf war in 1991. It is, like 1991, a mutual turkey shoot, a desperate and degenerate struggle between two maniacal forces — the neo-colonial militarism of a western world that has relied largely on guns to secure its material interests in this region, and a desperate yet defiant Arab Nation that appears prepared to withstand the most violent carnage that the West can subject it to for the sake of redeeming a modicum of Arab dignity and a spark of hope for a better future.

I would suggest that the single most enduring lesson of the Gulf war two years ago is that western militarism cannot solve our key Middle Eastern problems of pan-Arab fragmentation, social disequilibrium, domestic political autocracy, economic stagnation, income disparity, exaggerated militarism, and resource depletion. These problems must be addressed first and foremost through a political dialogue among the people of this region, with an eye to balanced and mutually beneficial relations with the West, and other global powers.

This is worth pondering today as a new round of western violence begets a new round of Arab defiance. Two years ago, in a similar situation, George Bush said that if Iraq did not leave Kuwait it would get its ass kicked. That happened, as predicted, to nobody's surprise. But what has happened since then is that the underlying regional forces that gave rise to the defiant Iraqi phenomenon, and to its widespread Arab support, have only grown stronger in tandem with continued American-led violence. This reality was appreciated by the American people, who allowed themselves to be fooled only temporarily by the euphoria of patriotic flag-waving during the Gulf war, but who saw through the falsehoods of George Bush and his crowd and threw them out of office in the November election. Bill Clinton and the Democrats would do well to remember this as they assume office.

They should not forget the legacy of George Bush, the man who used so much violence, and so little intellect, thought and human rationality, in his compulsion to kick the ass of the Iraqi leadership that he ended up achieving a rare feat in the history of the world — George Bush kicked his own ass right out of the presidential chair. Turkey shooting will do that to you, especially if you wrap it up in the flag of your people and degrade your country's otherwise honourable heritage in the process. This is a historical truth that spares no leaders, be they Americans or Arabs. Let's hope that Bill Clinton takes a moment to ponder these issues, and follows a policy in the Middle East that reflects the essential compassion and ideals of his people and his national heritage. Better to soar with the graceful eagles than to grovel with the dead or unemployed turkeys.

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Bush's solution or conflict resolution

By Izzat R. Dajani

Negotiation is defined as the art of securing agreement between two or more parties each of whom is interdependent of the other and wishes to maximise his own gains.

Through the process of negotiation, parties establish goals, learn the nature of the other's goals, identify the issues to be resolved, analyse the social context in which negotiation occurs and design strategies to maximise their chances of success. It is at the same time an exercise in discovery, conflict and compromise. It depends, for its success, on parties who believe they will gain more by working together than by being apart.

President George Bush and his administration appeared intent on reaching No solution. He adopted a Zero-Sum game, which is one of pursuit and evasion, in order to maximise personal gains independent of how the adversary (Iraq in this case) fares. It is a strategy of pure conflict which precludes any meeting of the minds and does not try to understand Iraq's point of view or even search for shared clues. Mr. Bush constantly used threats which in turn limited his own choices and alternatives, leading to increased constraint on President Saddam Hussein's side.

It must be noted here that irrespective of whether we like people or dislike them, agree or disagree with them, the goal in negotiation should centre on establishing an array of good working relationships, able to deal well with whatever differences exist or come along.

Negotiations between Arabs and Israelis are the best example of this.

President Bush personalised the dispute to alarming levels. He stopped addressing Iraq by its name, but by that of its leader: Saddam. He seemed obsessed by the man he defeated in war, the very man who outlasted him in office. He felt better and dismayed that he was not given enough credit for winning the Gulf war. He seemed to have a strong need for esteem, prestige, reputation and admiration, which he certainly lost by losing the U.S. presidential race. His recent behaviour revealed strong elements of a disturbed, conflict-ridden attitude. This is expressed in the disproportionate response by U.S. forces to Iraq's attempts

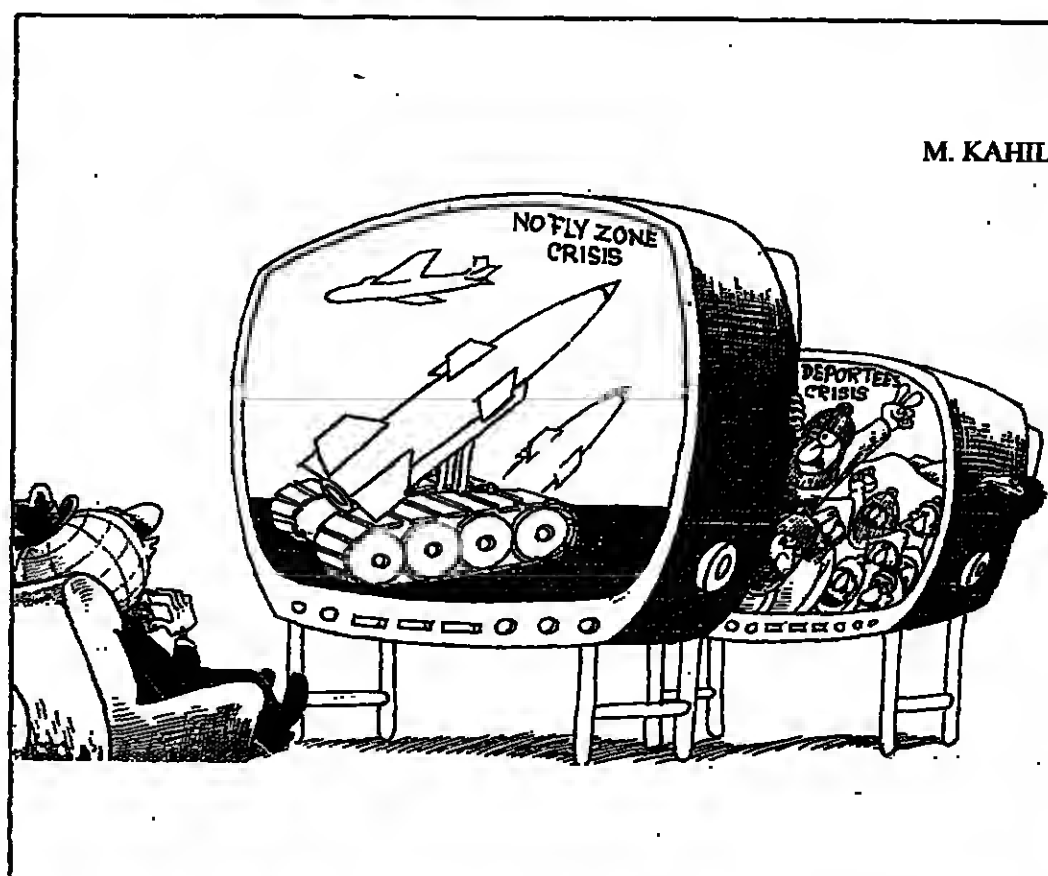
to defy U.N. resolutions. He relied exclusively on the threatened use of force, disregarding the value of personal, quiet diplomacy.

When historians, academicians and analysts start writing about the Bush era, they will find a long track record of deceptions, lies, evasions and opportunities lost by the person of the president. Professor Jeffrey Rubin, president of the programme on negotiation at Harvard Law School wrote, "If our purpose was to destroy Iraq as a military and political power in the Middle East, which now seems apparent, the American people were never informed of such an intention."

President Bush declared in the State of the Union address that the war in the Gulf was not a war he wanted. He insisted he worked hard to avoid it. Yet, according to Prof. Rubin, the actions and decisions taken by the U.S. after Aug. 2, 1990, while having the appearance of diplomacy for peace, were in fact the results of deliberately set choices towards a very different end. The U.S. demonised and dehumanised its adversary. Mr. Bush indulged in personal name-calling and provoking Saddam Hussein through threats and insults.

The U.S.'s approach should be one to influence Saddam Hussein to make a decision he perceives as best for him and his country and which, in turn, meets the West's interest. This is the very art and skill of negotiation not exercised by the U.S. in its conflict with Iraq. One way to guarantee failure is to seek unobtainable results, such as Mr. Bush's new goals of removing Saddam Hussein from office and going well beyond all Security Council resolutions in the matter. Making threats and public demands, and calling names, will not produce results.

The U.S. must seek to find shared interests with Iraq. It needs to recognise and acknowledge the legitimacy of at least some of Iraq's concerns and claims. Symbolic gestures are important in negotiations but are totally non-existent in America's handling of the problem. If a solution were to be reached, interests, not positions, must be reconciled. As symbolism by U.S. creates unity and allows Iraq (the less powerful) to participate, language gives the impression of



rationality and sensitivity. Unfortunately, both were being applied negatively by Mr. Bush.

Acts of deceit and delusion carried out by Mr. Bush included:

— The U.S. used its political pressure to force the Security Council to act contrary to its rules of procedure by requiring it to hold a meeting within 24 hours of a request so as to pass or defy a resolution, yet failing to make it hold any formal meetings for weeks on end. Iraq was willing to leave Kuwait peacefully if a resolution were passed that provided for most economic sanctions to be lifted then. Many members of the Security Council favoured this, yet the U.S. torpedoed any agreement on such a resolution.

— Mr. Bush kept calling his actions as U.N. or allies actions, yet every evidence indicated that they were totally instigated by the U.S. He was bypassing the Security Council and not advising its members fully of U.S. intentions. Yet every military attack on Iraq was labelled as a U.N.-sponsored

action. Some voices of disenchantment were heard, such as that of Russia, and others requested more information on U.S. intentions against Iraq.

— By a narrow margin, the U.S. Congress, in a joint resolution, authorised the use of force but called on the president to use every appropriate diplomatic and peaceful option. It asked him to notify Congress when such options and efforts failed. Yet, within four days, and certainly without any diplomatic or peaceful effort, Mr. Bush launched his war against Iraq.

— Mr. Bush's biggest nightmare was the possibility that Iraq might withdraw from Kuwait just before the Jan. 15, 1991 deadline expired. It would have deprived him of an excuse for war. To counteract this, he sent signals to Iraq that the U.S. would continue the naval blockade on Iraq's oil sales even if it withdrew peacefully from Kuwait.

— Mr. Bush exercised "cowboy policy" in handling members

of the U.N. Security Council. The economic aid programme for Yemen was instantly cancelled when it voted against a U.S. position. Warnings by the U.S. were passed to other members of the council, such as Zimbabwe, India and Colombia. The Security Council became a rubber stamp for all U.S. positions and was certainly not in the interest of the world at large, or even in the long term interests of the United States. Yet, Mr. Bush, filled with anger and hatred, opted to behave in such a contradictory manner.

Never before in contemporary U.S. history had the president acted in such disregard to the long-term interests of the U.S. itself. His actions bred more hatred of the U.S. among Arabs, it encouraged fundamentalism and extremism to grow and militancy to increase. Arab rulers traditionally friendly with the U.S. and long-time beneficiaries of U.S. support felt exposed and threatened. The double stan-

dards, witnessed by people in this area, of U.S. behaviour in dealing with issues related to their very existence cast a shadow of doubt on U.S. credibility as an honest arbitrator or a world leader.

In this context, we must view the actions of President-elect Bill Clinton with caution. He must be commended for standing behind the president as he recognised the fact that America cannot have two presidents at one time. He too will want to remain as the only president till his last day in office when his time comes. But Iraq must not help in extending further the personality dispute with Mr. Clinton as the latter repeated his willingness to work with Iraq if it complied fully with U.N. resolutions.

A positive element is that he calls Iraq by its very name and not as "Saddam". He also seems to recognise that in many of the traditional societies, such as Iraq, authority tends to reside in the person rather than in the position. He hopes that in dealing with President Saddam he will make use of efficiency, scientific methods and practicality, as opposed to emotions, drama and feelings as expressed in Mr. Bush's attitude. If Mr. Clinton were to obtain concessions from Iraq, he should rationalise the concession away from his own favour. As the relationship can become entangled with the problem, it is important to separate between personalities and issues.

Mr. Bush adopted positional bargaining which put relationship and substance in conflict. This, we hope, Mr. Clinton will avoid. For Iraq, it is worthy to note that weakness is often the superior strength because by relinquishing the initiative, the burden for the outcome is placed on the U.S. But it must also make use of positive "symbolism" from the Clinton camp.

Mr. Clinton is inheriting a long agenda of international problems from Mr. Bush, the "genius" in foreign policy. Somalia, Bosnia, and Palestinian deportees are just some of the examples of what Mr. Clinton has to deal with and solve. But above all, nothing would satisfy Mr. Bush more than the new president inheriting an ongoing personal hatred with Iraq and particularly its leaders. This, we hope Mr. Clinton will refuse to do.

كلمة من الامارات

Jordan's 19th century pioneers — study by Jordanian scholar breaks new ground

Pioneers Over Jordan: The Frontier Of Settlement In Transjordan, 1850-1914

By Raouf Sa'd Abu Jaber

I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, London

"They were the new farmers who accepted a challenge and were there to stay on the virgin land that they cultivated after it had been neglected for centuries."

In *Pioneers Over Jordan: The Frontier Of Settlement In Transjordan, 1850-1914* Raouf Sa'd Abu Jaber provides a detailed social history of the settlement of Jordan during the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The work, praised by the renowned Oxford scholar and Mr. Abu Jaber's teacher, Albert Hourani, as "lively, well-informed and highly original," has been recently re-released in a second, paperback edition.

Having extensively researched in libraries of the Middle East and Europe, as well as in government and family archives, Dr. Abu Jaber has fleshed out a remarkably vivid tale of the "pioneers" — immigrant settlers, becomer-farmers and Jordanian villagers — who tilled the sparsely populated, subsistence agriculture and generally forgotten south-eastern part of the Ottoman governorate of Syria until it blossomed into a grain-exporting flourishing community.

Organisationally, *Pioneers* is divided into three progressive stages: the first of environmental conditions and the nineteenth century history of Jordan; a middle section, which lays out the mechanisms behind early agricultural activity, including the seasonal cycle of agriculture and the inter-relationships between land ownership, labour, entrepreneurs and government; and the third which provides six case studies of pastoral ventures chosen because of their impact upon the development of agriculture in the nineteenth century.

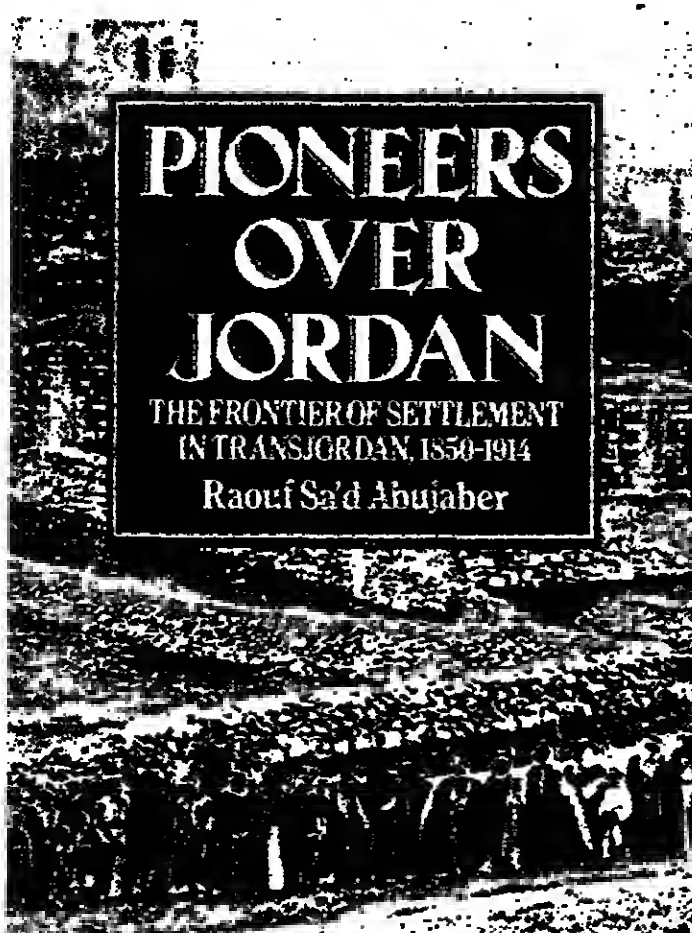
Because of Dr. Abu Jaber's lifelong personal and researched knowledge of the details of Jordanian history and social activity, coupled with a theoretical perspective nurtured at St. Anthony's College, Oxford, his scholarship contributes uniquely to the world's understanding of Ottoman, Jordanian and agricultural history. In addition, his studies of Jordan's rainfall patterns provide a lasting reference for future historians and interested citizens.

In conducting the rainfall study for *Pioneers*, the author, whose own family is among the early settlers under examination, was frustrated by the fact that, although he had records for Jordan after 1937, an investigation of the earlier period under study yielded only data for Jerusalem. Because rainfall patterns tend to be localised, one cannot assume that the trends shown in the recorded data for Jerusalem overlay Transjordan as well.

To overcome this obstacle the author employed statistical techniques to show that a relationship can be reasonably inferred by comparing rainfall measurements between the Jerusalem and Jordanian sites during the years after 1937. He then projected backward from the demonstrated twentieth century relationship to estimate nineteenth century rainfall levels for a given Jordanian site using its known Jerusalem counterpart.

His estimates, while inevitably involving some error, are methodologically sound and no doubt the best currently available. At the least they give an accurate overview of the general climatic trends during the period under study.

That "shortage of water has been a major problem



since ancient times" is still in evidence since modern Jordanian agriculture, limited as it is to the six per cent of the country's land which is cultivable, continues to be plagued by untrustworthy rainfall patterns. Hence in 1984 and 1986 wheat and barley production plummeted dramatically largely due to arid conditions.

In addition to this perennial weather predicament, the early settler farmers of the nineteenth century had to face even more insurmountable impediments due to an absence of governmental authority combined with marauding beduins and thieves in a sparsely populated region. All of these factors together form Dr. Abu Jaber's main explanatory variables.

In summary form, Dr. Abu Jaber's discussion explains that the variability of rain and presence of raiding tribesmen contributed to a lack of farm settlements beyond subsistence levels. This in turn abetted the Ottoman authorities' lack of interest in the south-eastern Bilad Al Sham (Greater Syria) province, since they could expect few tax revenues from the roaming tribes and poor village dwellers of the region.

Dr. Abu Jaber contends that a greater interest by the Ottomans in imposing control over the region might have brought forward the development of Transjordan's agriculture. But it was simply not to be. Instead, it appears that population pressures and wars led to an influx of settlers and this fed an Ottoman interest in establishing control to gain tax revenues.

From the sixteenth century to the mid-nineteenth, shortly before Dr. Abu Jaber's study begins, Transjordan's population was little changed at something under 52,000 inhabitants and may even

have declined over those three centuries due to harsh conditions and disease.

The early nineteenth century was a time of great instability as the creeping illness which overtook the Ottoman Empire prompted division, corruption and rapid replacement of governments. This invited attack from outside forces such as the puritanical Islamist Wahabi movement raiding across the Syrian province and up into the bordering fertile crescent from the Arabian peninsula.

Transjordan was considered an insignificant, arid zone to be overlooked except during the period when pilgrims travelled the caravan routes to Mecca to perform the Haj. Due to a lack of control by authorities in the region, collection of taxes tended to occur in short, sharp, bursts which fell heavily on the few settled peoples since the beduin tribesmen's mobility enabled them to escape.

BOOK REVIEW

While the Ottoman empire's unhappy condition was delivered a severe setback with the Egyptian conquest of the Governorate of Syria, under Ibrahim Pasha in 1831, the situation for the settled populations in Transjordan muddled along in the same stultifying crossfire between raiding beduins and corrupt governors for at least another twenty years.

Following the departure of the Egyptians in 1841 and reforms within the Ottoman Empire, change slowly began to arrive. Between the late 1840s and 1870s the Ottomans sought to strengthen their control over the whole of Greater Syria, including Transjordan.

Pursuant to this objective

the Ottomans supported the settled populations against the beduins in land disputes. But until the 1870s and somewhat paradoxically, due to the empire's relative weakness, the Ottoman authorities relied upon often rebellious tribal commanders of irregular forces (agha), usually North African and Egyptian in origin, in order to implement this policy.

Similarly, towards the end of the century, the Ottomans also encouraged new immigrant settlements, an activity detailed in Dr. Abu Jaber's case studies of Circassian and Chechen migration to Amman and other villages and the Egyptians in Sahab.

One method employed by the Ottomans in support of the settler claimants was to demand back taxes from the previous inhabitants of an agriculturally promising territory, often tribal borders. In most cases, their sheikhs could not afford to pay. Backed by Ottoman, or Ottoman-supported military forces, this land was then given over to the new farmers from whom the governorate could expect a steady income.

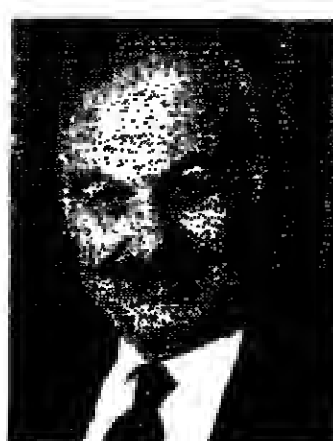
Indeed, Dr. Abu Jaber recounts that in the 1870s many farm villages willingly submitted tax forms to the government as they hoped to benefit from the increasing protection, legal and military, that this afforded. Still, for the most part, tax collection continued to be haphazard throughout the nineteenth century and the Ottoman authorities neglected to develop a fiscal plan for Transjordan.

And so it was not until the 1890s that Transjordan gained a level of agricultural productivity comparable to other Ottoman provinces. In addition, the Jordan Valley, which today comprises the more capital intensive and heavily irrigated portion of the Kingdom's agriculture, remained occupied by tribal groups and this prevented its large scale exploitation until the 1930s.

Throughout *Pioneers*, Dr. Abu Jaber highlights the continuous drama of the usually confrontational relationship between the settlers and the beduin. Clearly, governments preferred the former from which they could more fruitfully gain tax revenue and military conscripts. And ultimately the settlers needed the authorities for protection from what Dr. Abu Jaber characterised as an often "harsh and exploitative beduin presence."

Yet, as Albert Hourani notes in his foreword to the volume, *Pioneers*, while certainly confirming the antagonism, does not dwell simplistically on the notion of an "immemorial hostility between the desert and the town." The relationship portrayed is far more complex when examined carefully.

By John-Lee P. Holmes



Dr. Raouf Sa'd Abu Jaber

While without doubt the villagers often had problems with the beduin, the most effective defence was manifestly two-fold — building up fortifications and the extension of hospitality. Indeed, in many cases symbiotic relationships developed between the two communities in trade and fellowship.

So one aspect affecting relations seems to be the tactics employed when approaching the beduin. Another plainly involves timing. Periods when governments were stronger seem also to have ensured that the conjunction between the desert and the town occurred on more equal footing.

Furthermore, by the 1870s, when production of cereals in Transjordan first outstripped population growth, more beduin had either learned that farming could be a productive way of life or that the presence of farmers engendered greater variation in diet and trade. *Pioneers* illustrates this complexity best with its case study of Sattam Ibn Fayiz, "the first nomadic sheikh not only to own land but also to place it under cultivation."

It is upon these kinds of pivotal themes — the role of authority in supporting the pioneers, their relationship with the beduins and with townspeople — that *Pioneers* might have benefited from a structured concluding chapter to reflect in abstraction from the historical details it provides in such an admirable fashion. While the elucidation of these relationships is present throughout the book, a summarising analytical de-nouement might lead greater impact.

Still, on the whole *Pioneers Over Jordan* is an impressive work of scholarship. It should prove indispensable for Jordanians who wish to better understand their historical abode, for foreign visitors who intend to stay for longer periods and want more than the usual touristic guides and for scholars, as the author's personal familiarity with his subject adds invaluable insight.

Undoubtedly, Dr. Raouf Abu Jaber's study will help preserve the memory of those "pioneering spirits who...bad the will and determination to start a new way of life in dry farming areas on the fringe of the desert."

Diary

A FOLKLORIC TALE: Although they hate to admit it openly, and without exonerating the U.S. and its allies from their moral and legal responsibilities, some Jordanians concede that by provoking the Americans and the West, Saddam Hussein took up too big a challenge and incurred unto himself the wrath of the Western alliance. The most popular joke in Jordan, these days, talks about an eagle and a fox on board an airplane flying over the Middle East. The eagle rings for the hostess who comes and asks him what he wanted, only to be told that he was bored and just wanted to tease her. A few minutes later the eagle does the same thing and the hostess begins to get very irritated. The fox, watching the situation, thinks of doing the same, so the hostess comes and the fox tells her he was just teasing. When this was repeated and the hostess could not take it anymore, the airplane's crew decide to throw both the eagle and the fox out of the plane in midair. They open the door, but the fox, aware of what was about to happen, complains to the eagle that he has no wings to fly. So the eagle tells the fox: "Sorry, but since you have no wings, you shouldn't have teased the hostess."

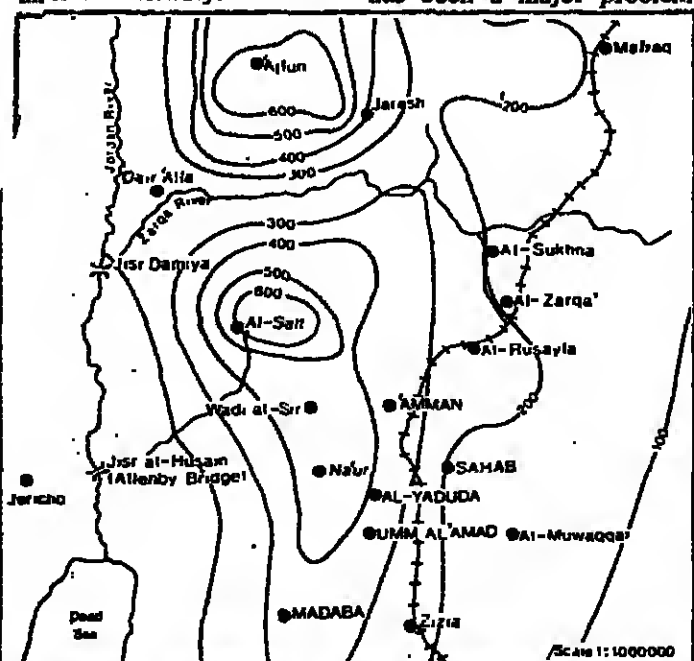
ON A MORE SOBER NOTE: Well-known columnist Dr. Fahed Al Fanek is taking the Muslim Brotherhood Movement newspaper *Al Rabat* to court over a nasty column in which the writer used every negative adjective in the dictionary but chickened out when it came to tailing the column with the name of its writer. The column also did not address Dr. Fanek by name but it certainly was clear who it was lashing at. Dr. Fanek's style of choice of topics for his column may not be everybody's cup of tea but his opinions can be argued with respect, and the *Al Rabat* column was not respectful, most media observers agree. A senior journalist who read the *Al Rabat* column said it can only be viewed as "an exercise in intellectual terrorism." In shed more light on the content of the column entitled the "misled columnist" one only has to look at its introductory paragraph. In it, Dr. Fanek is placed in the camp of those journalists "who are Jordanian only by passport, carry from their history only the time frame, understand from their trade only illegal profit and slander, their thoughts are like their hearts: Devious, just like a rotten tree which was uprooted and has no opinion-base, their words are like them: Nasty and decayed." The writer, whoever it is, then says that Islamists have usually refrained from answering Dr. Fanek's attacks on them "because we do not spit in the ground and do not swear at the dark, we have stayed away from the ignorant." At the same time that this column was published, Dr. Fanek also received anonymous threats to his personal safety. Dr. Fanek has been approached by some Muslim Brotherhood personalities, who certainly have no reason to see eye to eye with him but who, nevertheless, sympathised with his anger at this column from which they washed their hands. Many Jordanian journalists are looking to the Journalists' Association for some action which until now appears to be missing from the scene. One columnist said that if the association does not campaign against this kind of journalism soon, "I, as a Muslim, will write against this newspaper which claims to write on behalf of Muslims."

BACKSTABBING LEFT AND RIGHT: A columnist in *Al Dastour* lambasted the Muslim Brotherhood movement last week for breaking an agreement with other political forces in the country to hold joint public rallies in support of the 415 Palestinian deportees now stranded on the Israeli-Lebanese border. Saleh Ghalib implicitly accused the Movement of trying to use the case of the deportees to its own benefit and turn it into material for electioneering and party campaigns. He said different parties in Jordan had agreed to have joint functions in support of the Palestinians. The movement, however, takes another viewpoint of this whole affair. A Muslim Brotherhood deputy, who questioned about Ghalib's column said that the meeting of the committee included Amman Deputy Hamman Saeed and that if he had made the mistake of giving the impression that the Muslim Brotherhood movement would only have functions jointly with other parties "then he did not tell us." According to the deputy-source, Mr. Saeed might have been speaking in his own personal capacity, and not on behalf of the leadership of the movement. The question that comes to mind is why would the leftists and centrists be upset with the movement for not including them in these functions when it did not even include the Islamic Action Front, which is basically another Muslim Brotherhood-dominated political party? Very confusing, isn't it?

BEWARE OF CHANGE: On the day that Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker announces a reshuffle in his government, he can be located at the headquarters of the Public Security Department. This information became available to the diary — minus the shape of the reshuffle of course — at the tail of another story dealing with the internal affairs of the Civil Defence Department. According to the story teller, a brigadier general from a well-known Irbid family was retired recently from his post as part of a regular change in the department. The general apparently took the retirement personally and took his case, not very politely, to the head of the Civil Defence Department. The first time he did that he was excused by his boss, but the second time he charged into the boss's office, his stream of abusive statements had an audience of a visiting Arab delegation. The general was duly court-martialed and sentenced to three months in prison and was demoted to the rank of colonel. His retirement decision still stood. His family from Irbid intervened on his behalf with the deputies of the governorate who met with the Prime Minister to resolve the issue. Sharif Zeid, after releasing the still retired colonel from prison, expressed his surprise at how vicious retiring officials can be. A smart deputy, who usually does not miss a cue when he sees one, linked this case with the rumour of an impending reshuffle and asked the premier what he would do for protection on the day he announces a reshuffle in the government. "I will have to do it out of the Public Security Department," the premier reportedly joked.

PETRA BANK SCANDAL, AGAIN: The scandal-ridden Petra Bank this week put on auction a collection of paintings that belong to the liquidated bank, which used to be run by fugitive banker Ahmad Chalabi. The paintings themselves, done by artists from Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq and other countries, were on show at the Plaza Hotel for over a week during which art collectors made their bids in closed envelopes deposited in a box at the showroom. But even before the envelopes were opened, one Italian hostess reportedly managed to buy one of the paintings by getting it outside the auction despite the fact that others had made bids on the artwork by artist Munira Toukan, which is a portrait of a woman. When one of the collectors returned to the showroom to take another look at the painting he hoped to win in the auction, he discovered to his shock that it was no longer there. The Jordanian collector was told that Bassam Atari, the man in charge of the liquidation of the bank, had sold it to the Italian hostess for JD 150, after she had begged and pleaded with him endlessly. The collector was outraged but his complaints were ignored. He went home and managed to call Atari to give him a piece of his mind. The collector, dismayed that Atari aborted his chance of getting his favourite painting of the entire collection of over 300 works, said Atari's action amounted to mismanagement of funds, similar to that done by Chalabi, though at a much smaller scale.

Normeen Murad



A map reproduced from *Pioneers* showing the six case studies — Al Yadda, Al Na'ama, Umm Al 'Amad, Amman, Madaba and Sahab — as well as rainfall averages derived from the years 1937-1961

By Belinda Hopkinson
The Associated Press

C'est elementaire: France's first Sherlock Holmes Club opens

PARIS — Having paid their dues and answered three obligatory Trivia questions, charter members of France's first Sherlock Holmes Society now want to redress a historical oversight.

Atop the new club's priority list: Asking that the detective indeed be named to France's Legion of Honour. According to the opening passage of *The Adventure Of The Golden Pince Nez*, Holmes received this honour from France's president in 1894 after tracking down the notorious "boulevard assassin," though details of the case never were chronicled.

Fascination with the fictional sleuth is global. The Sherlock Holmes Society of France, which numbered about 30 members after its inaugural meeting last week, joins

more than 500 clubs in the United States, England, Japan, Denmark and elsewhere.

Traditionally, each society takes its name from one of the Holmes stories. The Paris-based club is *The Hard-ware Dealers Of Franco-Midland* after a hardware company cited in *The Adventure Of The Stockbroker's Clerk*.

In the story, Holmes works as a consulting detective for Franco-Midland, which operates 134 offices in France.

Holmes and his partner, Dr. Watson, first appeared in Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *A Study In Scarlet* in 1887. They featured in three other novels and more than 50

shorter stories and have inspired hundreds of studies, spoofs and films.

"I would say there is no language that the Holmes stories haven't been translated into," said Thierry Saint-Joanis, an investigative journalist and one of the French club's four founders.

"There are even stories in Eskimo."

Why such enduring popularity?

"First it's the mystery itself," said Yves-Charles Fercocq, an animated film artist. "Second, it's the depiction of Victorian England with its bandits and eccentrics...and third. It's the wonder of the

storytelling. It leaves you with your mouth hanging wide open."

Mr. Fercocq also belongs to *The Mini Tongas*, an international group of Holmes fans who have constructed miniatures of Holmes' sitting room, as described in Doyle's works.

Mr. Fercocq's model, on display at the French club's inauguration, took more than five years to build. It contains about 100 miniature objects, including a wall-mounted head of the hound of the Baskervilles; a case containing two severed ears sent to Watson's wife; and, of course, Holmes' famous

pipe.

Co-founder Jean-Pierre Cagnat, a newspaper cartoonist for *Le Monde*, belongs to other clubs in the United States and England.

"I'm the first and only Frenchman to become a member of the New York Holmes Club, the Baker Street Irregulars," he said.

Mr. Cagnat, like other founders, dressed in Victorian costume for the inauguration. A woman dressed as a British police officer stone-facedly surveilled guests while guarding Holmes objects on display.

The inaugural evening included unveiling of a French translation of Sherlock

Did you say compatible?

By Jean-Claude Elias

Once upon a time, during World War II, a group of scientists put up the first working electronic computer. After longing, during centuries, for a machine able to take the pain out of his complex calculations and also work as his auxiliary but trustful memory, man's dream had finally come true. Some remembered that the French Blaise Pascal in the seventeenth century and the English Charles Babbage in the nineteenth century were the actual forefathers of the modern computer, and that they deserved to be considered as those "without whom it wouldn't have been possible" although their inventions were mechanical and not electronic.

Man thought that the most difficult part of the job had been done and that all he needed to do now was to learn how to operate the dream machine. Alas, that was ignoring the mischievous plans of the newborn and already powerful computer industry. Something called the Operating System (OS) — a set of instructions and commands one had to learn before actually using a computer — was created. The first OS was so difficult to learn for a person with anything less than a Ph.D. in Science and an IQ of at least 150 that many hesitated between going through this painful and long process and returning to manual work.

With time, the OS became a little easier to use, though not friendly yet. But the software designers, the very people who developed and wrote the OS, were already preparing their counter-attack. They decided that different machines would have different Operating Systems. So each time Man had to change his computer and buy from another manufacturer, he had to learn a new OS. He decided to accept this "no choice" situation and whenever possible, he would stay with the same manufacturer to avoid spending more time on learning new OS than actually using the computer. But the manufacturer found out how to produce different series of machines, each with a different OS and the reason that was always given for this fickleness had some logic in it: Designing new and more performing machines meant that old OS were not up to the job and new ones must constantly be developed to allow the user to make the best out of the new equipment.

After a while Man thought of using his only weapon: His purchasing power. He simply decided to buy less computers and wait to see what the industry would come up with. Young entrepreneurs with fresh ideas introduced the compatible Personal Computer (PC) for the masses while at the same time, software engineers in a telephone

chip talk



company's secret laboratory designed the transportable UNIX operating system for larger computers. The compatible PC meant that all that man had to do was to learn one single and unique OS, the MS-DOS, in order to be able to use any PC.

Moreover the MS-DOS was supposed to be easy to use, "friendly" as they put it. The UNIX, on the other hand, reserved for specialists, was meant to work on most large main-frame computers with minimum modifications from machine to machine.

Man took a break and thought that this time it was for good — using computers, PC's or big ones, was going to be real easy, a piece of cake. But one more time the industry was able to upset him, and on two fronts. First, compatibility was never absolute, there were always minor differences between machines, disks, screens, keyboards, etc., and as minor as they could be, these differences prevented man from working properly and sometimes caused more damage in terms of lost time, nervous breakdowns and heart attacks. Second, the same OS on the same machine came with different versions — Man hated this word — again with differences important enough to interrupt work, make previous disks unreadable, change format, require more memory, and so on.

Finally man was presented with the magical Open Systems concept, that was designed to allow any user on any computer, of any size and from any manufacturer, to transport his programmes and data, from one machine to another, and be able to use and process them without any modification. Perfection in other words. "Where's the catch?" Man thought. "No catch at all" replied the All-Manufacturers' Choir in unison. "but give us a little more time for the actual implementation". And Man resumed his dream.

Waltzing Matilda (Dedicated to the 415)

By E. Yaghi

I'm wasted and wounded and I lie on a makeshift bed in a tattered camp pitched on barren hills in the middle of nowhere. There's pain in my stomach, not from my wound but from pangs of hunger which gnaw at my insides until it seems like there is a battle going on within my digestive system. Just when I get happy thinking about how hungry I am, I remember the more acute pain in my chest and then it overwhelms me and I am able to think of little else. Sometimes I become delirious and begin to mumble. My tent mates tell me I say such things as, "See you tomorrow, your husband in a bottle with a couple of liras for you Matilda so you can buy some black velvet and make the most beautiful thobe. When you wear your thobe, you and I will waltz by the light of the silver moon on the shores of Palestine."

I am an innocent victim of Israeli aggression and a blinded ally and I'm tired of all these soldiers here. No one speaks our language and everything's broken and my strength is slowly soaking away. Last night my mates and I were fired on. Someone said, "The shooting seems to be from up north."

Another said, "No, I think it's from the south." While a third said, "Maybe it's from the Israelis. They got tired of us being an international issue and embarrassment so they decided to just finish us off!"

I feel my inmates and I are sacrificial lambs waiting to be slaughtered to appease the anger of maverick warlords with their cold-blooded sighs. Our condition deteriorates day by day, minute by minute. Hardly anyone at night can sleep and if they do, not for long. Strong mountain winds rush down and tear at our feeble shelters, pulling and ripping at the canvas. And nothing keeps out the freezing cold which creeps in from under the ground. My teeth make so much noise chattering I barely hear anything else.

What will you do Matilda if I die? Will you cry for me? Will you sing sad songs? Will you put flowers on my grave and talk to me telling me how you are doing and how much

you miss me? I don't know how much longer I will be able to last. The doctor says I need medical attention immediately, but immediately seems to last an eternity.

Though I don't want your sympathy, you should not say that the streets are for dreaming now. The warlords and their gentlemen and ghosts that sell memories want a piece of the action anyhow, so the deserted alleyways are bare but for an occasional snake that slithers by. Some days when I doze off into befuddled hallucinations, I am rudely awakened by the braying of John's donkey. I tell the old fellow John because he rides on his beast without a care in the world but to bring us some meager supplies he has smuggled in. If the flap of my tent is up, I hear him barter and see him flash a toothless grin.

"Hey, old man!" a mate will holler, "what have you got for us today?"

John slides off his faithful donkey and shouts, "Oh, just a few odds and ends. Come and see!"

The boys get daily newspapers and sometimes one will sit beside me and read the latest news about our situation, but my attention span is too short to make heads or tails out of anything. I only hear my stomach growling, my teeth chattering and feel the pain from my wound stark with claws through my body like a ferocious lion. I've told my friends to take the few liras I have if and when I die and send them to you Matilda. Don't forget to buy some black velvet and embroider the colours of Palestine on your thobe. When you finish making it, wait till the moon radiates a silver light and go out beyond the open sewers and tin houses in your camp to where the shores of Palestine sing of freedom and there, I will be waiting to waltz with you.

Meanwhile in a weather battered old tent in a hole someplace with my wound that will never yield in the middle of nowhere in no-man's land but yours, I think of you. Here there are no prima donnas and the perfume is gone and my old shirt is stained with blood and sweat and tears. A final good-night to you Palestinian street sweepers, night watchmen, flame keepers and good-night Matilda, too!

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, Jan. 21

8:30 Uddi Buck

Danny

9:10 The Human Factor

Second Opinion

A couple approach the professor to have a second opinion on the husband's illness and the results are astonishing.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Movie Of The Week

Prison Stories

Women On The Inside

Friday, Jan. 22

8:30 Comedy

9:10 E.N.G.

Division Of Labour

The reporters go on strike and the union supports their demands.

10:00 News In English

Saturday, Jan. 23

8:30 America's Funniest Home Videos

9:00 Perspectives

9:30 Science Workshop

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film

Hestage

Starring: Carol Burnett



Dirtwater Dynasty Tuesday at 9:10

A young girl's tragedy: Which is more difficult — to escape from prison or run away from an abusive father?

Sunday, Jan. 24

8:30 Who's The Boss

Broadcast Blues

Tony and his daughter, Samantha, compete for the job of TV sportscaster.

9:10 Documentary — National Geographic

Journey To The Bottom Of The World.

9:30 Science Workshop

10:00 News In English

10:20 Law And Order

Cradle To Grave

A small coloured child is found dead and the police try to find the killer.

Monday, Jan. 25

8:30 Step By Step

A Day In The Life

9:10 Sherlock Holmes

10:00 News In English

10:20 Vietnam

Tuesday, Jan. 26

8:30 Perfect Strangers

Citizenship Part 2

Larry leaves to Mebus Island to convince his friend Baky and his mother that they must come back to the United States.

9:10 Dirtwater Dynasty

10:00 News In English

10:20 Prime Suspect

Wednesday, Jan. 27

8:30 Saved By The Bell

9:00 Spotlight

9:30 James Randi

10:00 News In English

10:20 Bodyline

Into a Depression-racked Australia in late 1932 a young English gentleman, Douglas Jardine, leads a team of cricketers on a mission to win back the Ashes.

Newly appointed Captain of England, Jardine has come to believe that the success of that mission depends on beating one man — a brilliant young Australian batsman called Donald Bradman. His strategy will employ tactics never before used in "a game between gentlemen." His major weapon will be a speed bowler by the name of Harold Larwood.

As the architect of infamous "bodyline" bowling, Douglas Jardine becomes the most hated man ever to set foot in Australia. His tactics spark off a public outcry in this country: outrage which reaches a climax during the third test in Adelaide. Harold Larwood, the former miner from Nottingham who spearhead his campaign, is branded "the wrecker" by irate fans. Donald Bradman, the man he sets out to destroy, is now an Australian legend.

Bodyline is the story of one of the most momentous dramatic sporting events of this century. But the bodyline controversy was not just a conflict which began and ended on the cricket field and the story Bodyline is far more than a simple tale of a cricket war.

Thursday Jan. 21

1793 — France's King Louis XVI is beheaded.

1919 — Sinn Fein congress in Dublin, Ireland, adopts declaration of independence.

1924 — First nationalist Chinese congress at Canton admits Communists and welcomes Russian advisors.

1942 — German forces launch new offensive in Western African desert in World War II.

1949 — Chiang Kai-Shek resigns China presidency following Nationalist Party reversals.

1954 — First nuclear-powered submarine, U.S.S. Nautilus, is launched in United States.

1968 — Britain draws up plans to withdraw its troops from far East and Persian Gulf.

1970 — France's sale of Mirage jet planes to Libya is announced; Iraq foils attempt to overthrow its government and executes 12 men.

1974 — United States rejects South Vietnam's request for Naval Support in fighting with Chinese for Paracel Islands.

1986 — Auto packed with explosives blows up near office of president Amin Gemayel's Phalangist Party in East Beirut, killing 22 people and wounding 102.

1990 — East Germany's Communist Party expels Egon Krenz, ousted leader who oversaw opening of Berlin Wall.

1991 — Latvia's Parliament forms volunteer home guard and authorities bolster defenses at public buildings hours after Soviet commandos stage pre-dawn assault on republic's police headquarters.

1992 — United Nations Security Council urges Libya to surrender two agents indicted by United States in bombing of Pan Am flight 103.

Friday, Jan. 22

By The Associated Press

1771 — Spain agrees to cede Falkland Islands to Britain.

1811 — France's Napoleon Bonaparte annexes Oldenburg and alienates Russia's Tsar Alexander.

1879 — About 4,000 heavily armed Zulu warriors assault British troops in Battle of Rorke's Drift (South Africa), where 139 soldiers repel attacks for almost 12 hours.

1905 — "Bloody Sunday" in St. Petersburg, Russia, when workers in revolt are fired upon by Cossacks and imperial army troops.

1945 — Soviet forces reach Oder river in World War II.

1964 — Indonesia and Malaysia agree to ceasefire in their undeclared border war.

1968 — North Korea seizes U.S. navy ship Pueblo and holds crew as spies.

1973 — U.S. President Richard Nixon announces that accord has been reached in Vietnam War.

1989 — Civilian commandos and army troops backed by tanks battle at infantry base on outskirts of Buenos Aires in Argentina.

1991 — Iraq's oil ministry says it will suspend sale of

1944 — Allied forces begin landings at Anzio in Italy in World War II.

1957 — Israeli forces complete withdrawal from Sinai Peninsula, but remain in Gaza Strip.

1966 — In Nigeria, it is disclosed that Prime Minister Abubakar Tafawa Balewa is dead, apparently slain in coup a week earlier.

1968 — U.S. B-52 bomber carrying four hydrogen bombs plunges into Greenland Bay, and Washington says there is no danger of explosions because bombs were unarmed.

1986 — Three Sikhs are convicted of 1984 assassination of India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and are sentenced to death.

1989 — Israeli cabinet discusses new get-tough policies that allow soldiers to shoot even when their lives are not in danger.

1990 — Azerbaijani Parliament threatens to secede from the Soviet Union.

1991 — Slovenia and Croatia go on alert against Yugoslav military crackdown after defying federal deadline to disarm their police.

1992 — President Bush opens a 47-nation conference on Soviet aid.

1999 — French troops capture Italian city of Naples.

1849 — Prussia suggests German union without Austria.

1878 — Britain's Cabinet sends fleet to Constantinople at Sultan Abdul-Hamid II's request.

1913 — Nazim Pasha is murdered in Turkish coup, and Shevket Pasha forms ministry.

1920 — Holland refuses to surrender Germany's former Kaiser William II to allies for punishment as World War I criminal.

1937 — Seventeen Communist leaders confess in Moscow that they conspired with Leon Trotsky to undermine Soviet regime of Joseph Stalin.

1945 — Soviet forces reach Oder river in World War II.

1964 — Indonesia and Malaysia agree to ceasefire in their undeclared border war.

1968 — North Korea seizes U.S. navy ship Pueblo and holds crew as spies.

1973 — U.S. President Richard Nixon announces that accord has been reached in Vietnam War.

1989 — Civilian commandos and army troops backed by tanks battle at infantry base on outskirts of Buenos Aires in Argentina.

1991 — Iraq's oil ministry says it will suspend sale of

gasoline "for a short period."

1992 — Estonian Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar resigns, unable to cope with severe food and energy shortages.

Sunday, Jan. 24

1798 — Irish rebellion breaks out.

1848 — James Marshall finds gold nugget in U.S. state of California, touching off gold rush.

1907 — First boy scout troop is organized by Sir Robert Baden-Powell in England.

1924 — Petrograd is renamed Leningrad in honor of founder of Soviet Union.

1946 — U.N. General Assembly votes to create U.N. atomic energy commission.

1967 — South Vietnam's Premier Nguyen Cao Ky runs into wild anti-war demonstration on visit to New Zealand.

1973 — U.S. negotiator Henry Kissinger says Vietnam peace agreement worked out in Paris also means end to fighting in Laos and Cambodia. Hanoi's De Luc Tho calls agreement "a great victory for the Vietnamese people."

1986 — Guerrillas advance into Ugandan capital of Kampala as army opposition crumbles, pushing military government to edge of collapse.

1989 — Rescuers struggle against heavy smoke and toxic gas to reach at least 100 miners trapped inside collapsed gold mine in southern Peru.

1991 — Lithuania asks Soviet Union to withdraw its troops from buildings seized in that Baltic republic.

1992 — Judge sentences army colonel and lieutenant to 30 years in prison for 1989 massacre of six Jesuit priests.

Monday, Jan. 25

1494 — Alfonso II succeeds to throne of Naples on death of Ferdinand I.

1544 — Sir Thomas Wyatt raises army in England to oppose Mary I's projected marriage.

1579 — Union of Utrecht is signed by Holland, Zealand, Utrecht, Gelderland, Friesland, Groningen and Overijssel, marking foundation of Dutch Republic.

1802 — France's Napoleon Bonaparte becomes president of the Italian Republic.

1831 — Polish Diet proclaims independence of Poland, dethrones Nicholas, and deposes the Romanovs.

1944 — Battle for Cassino begins in Italy in World War II.

1952 — Crisis arises between France and Germany

over administration of the Saar.

1959 — Britain signs trade pact with East Germany.

1962 — Africa heads of state of Monrovia Group (Liberia, Togo, Nigeria and Cameroon) issue charter for Pan-African Cooperation.

1975 — Sheikh Mujibur Rahman abolishes parliamentary rule in Bangladesh and assumes absolute powers as president.

1983 — Japanese government lodges strong protest with Soviet Union over Soviet military buildup in Far East, including possible transfer of intermediate-range missiles from Europe to Siberia.

1986 — Voyager 2, sweeping to within 31,000 miles (51,000 kilometers) of Uranus, discovers a 10th ring, a 15th moon and a north pole that angles downward.

1989 — Cambodia's Premier Hun Sen rejects proposal for international peacekeeping force in his country.

1991 — Leaders of rival Yugoslav republics of Serbia and Croatia meet in effort to defuse tensions there.

1992 — Russian President Boris Yeltsin says Russia will stop targeting U.S. cities with nuclear missiles.

Tuesday, Jan. 26

1841 — British sovereignty is proclaimed over Hong Kong.

1885 — The Mahdi takes Khartoum in Sudan, and British General Charles Gordon is killed.

1931 — Mahatma Gandhi is released from prison in India for discussions with government.

1934 — Germany signs 10-year nonaggression pact with Poland.

1942 — First U.S. expeditionary force arrives in Europe in World War II, with troops put ashore in Northern Ireland.

1952 — Famed Shepherd's Hotel in Cairo, Egypt, is burned during riots by mobs demanding British withdrawal from the Suez.

1957 — Kashmir constitution for incorporation with India goes into effect.

1967 — U.S. President Ronald Reagan warns Americans to get out of Lebanon.

1990 — Romanian Vice President Dimitru Mazilu resigns to protest increasingly repressive policies of that country's interim government.

1991 — Seven Iraqi warplanes fly to Iran and Pentagon says at least two dozen have landed there in recent days.

By The Associated Press

Miscellaneous facts about past U.S. presidents

NEW YORK (R) — Here are some miscellaneous facts about past U.S. presidents.

— Only one president was born in a hospital. He was Jimmy Carter.

— The last president to be elected on neither the Republican nor Democratic ticket was Millard Fillmore, who was the whig party candidate in 1850.

— Only one president was divorced — Ronald Reagan, from the actress Jane Wyman, in 1949. He married actress Nancy Davis in 1952.

— The shortest term in office was that of William Henry Harrison, who served 32 days before dying of pneumonia.

The longest was Franklin D. Roosevelt, who served for more than 12 years before dying at the start of his fourth term.

— Only one president was impeached (formally charged with misconduct in office) — Andrew Johnson, who was acquitted.

— Only one president resigned — Richard Nixon.

— 17 presidents lacked middle names or initials.

— Eight presidents had surnames ending in -son.

— No president has ever died during the month of May, but seven of 35 died in July, three of them, including Thomas Jefferson, on July 4.

هكذا فت الامل

Jack Nicholson could score a double in race for 1992 Oscars

By Bob Thomas
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Two-time Academy Award-winner Jack Nicholson could score a double whammy in the 1992 Oscar race, but his history dictates that the odds are against it.

Nicholson already was named Best Supporting Actor by the National Board of Review for his electrifying performance as a commander caught in a scandal in *A Few Good Men*.

Most observers agree that he is a cinch to be nominated as Best Actor for Hoffa and as Best Supporting Actor for *A Few Good Men*. Yet no performer ever has won in both categories in the same year.

British actress Emma Thompson has emerged as an early favorite for the Best Actress prize, as she scooped up three top film awards recently.

Miss Thompson picked up honors from the New York Film Critics Circle, the Los Angeles Film Critics Association and the National Board of Review's D.W. Griffith Award for her role as a kind-hearted Edwardian woman who marries a wealthy

widower in *Howards End*. The film, an adaptation of the E.M. Forster novel, also was named best picture by the Board of Review.

The New York Critics gave top honors to *The Player*, Robert Altman's laceration of the Hollywood movie industry, while the Los Angeles critics named Clint Eastwood's Western epic, *Unforgiven*, best picture.

Joining Nicholson in the impressive field of possible Best Actor are Denzel Washington, whose majestic performance of the slain black leader in *Malcolm X* won him Best Actor Honors from the New York Film Critics; Jack Lemmon, named Best Actor by the National Board of Review for his galvanizing performance in *Glengarry Glen Ross*; and Clint Eastwood, the Los Angeles Film Critics Best Actor choice for *Unforgiven*.

Other possibilities for best actor include Tom Cruise, *A Few Good Men*; Robert Downey Jr., *Chaplin*; Steve Martin, *Leap of Faith*; and Robin Williams, *Toys*.

Prime possibilities as Best Picture appear to be *Unforgiven*, *A Few Good Men*, *Chaplin*, *Aladdin*, *Malcolm X*, *Howards End* and *A River*

Runs Through It.

Nicholson's double potential adds zest to an Academy Awards competition that promises a spirited contest among the men and a woefully thin field for the women. Ironically, the theme of the March 29 ceremonies is Oscar salutes women and the movies.

"Yeah?" says a questioning Shirley MacLaine. "So where are the women's roles? The industry is still run by men who don't believe that audiences are interested in what happens to women."

A winner as Best Actress in *Terms of Endearment* in 1983, Miss MacLaine may be among the nominees on Feb. 17 because of her performance in *Used People*.

Besides Miss MacLaine and Miss Thompson, others being mentioned for Best Actress include Susan Sarandon, *Lorenzo's Oil*; Mary McDonnell and Alfre Woodard, *Passion Fish*; Michelle Pfeiffer, *Love Field*; and Geena Davis, *A League Of Their Own*.

For supporting actress, Judy Davis, *Husbands And Wives* she won honors from the Los Angeles critics and National Board of Review; Geraldine Chaplin and Moira



Clint Eastwood

Kelly, Chaplin; Miranda Richardson, *Damage*, *The Crying Game* and *Enchanted April* — she's been named Best Supporting Actress by the New York critics; Joan Plowright, *Enchanted April*; Joan Cusack, *Toys*; Vanessa Redgrave, *Howards End*; and Marcia Gay Harden, *Used People*.

Besides Nicholson, other supporting actor possibilities are Gene Hackman, *Unforgiven* — he won the New York and Los Angeles Critics Prize; Kevin Bacon, *A Few Good Men*; Seymour Cassel, *In The Soup*; Tom Skerritt, *A River Runs Through It*; Sydney Pollack, *Husbands And Wives*; David Strathairn, *Passion Fish*; and

Anthony Hopkins, *Howards End*.

Eastwood was awarded the Los Angeles Critics Prize for Best Director for *Unforgiven*, and is a front-runner in that race, along with Altman, named Best Director by New York critics and James Ivory, named Best Director by the National Board. Other Attenborough, Chaplin; Spike Lee, *Malcolm X*; Barry Levinson, *Toys*; Robert Redford, *A River Runs Through It*.

If Nicholson should receive a double nomination, he would be the sixth actor to receive such an honour. Four won in the supporting category, one went home Oscar-less.

The parade started in 1938 when Fay Bainter was named for starring in *White Banners* and support in *Jezabel*. She won for *Jezabel* but Bette Davis was named Best Actress for the same film.

In 1943, Teresa Wright was nominated for Best Actress in *The Pride of the Yankees* and support in *Mrs. Miniver*. She took the Supporting Oscar, and Greer Garson was named Best Actress for *Mrs. Miniver*.

The most curious double came in 1944, when Barry

Fitzgerald was nominated in both categories for *Going My Way*. Bing Crosby was the Best Actor winner in that film, and Fitzgerald won for *Support*. The incident prompted a rule change prohibiting actors from being nominated in both categories for the same film.

Jessica Lange was nominated in 1982 for starring in *Frances* and support in *Tootsie*. The latter brought her a statuette, but Meryl Streep was selected Best Actress for *Sophie's Choice*.

Sigourney Weaver was tabbed for *Gorillas In The Mist* (Best Actress) and *Working Girl* (Supporting). Her score: Zero.

A Nicholson nomination in both acting categories would bring him a near-record career total of 11. He has been nominated as Supporting Actor for *Easy Rider*, 1969; *Reds*, 1981; *Terms of Endearment*, 1983 (winner); *For Best Actor*; *Five Easy Pieces*, 1970; *The Last Detail*, 1973; *Chinatown*, 1974; *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*, 1975 (winner); *Prizzi's Honour*, 1985; *Ironweed*, 1987.

Katharine Hepburn remains the nominations champion with 12.



Jack Nicholson

Chronicle of a success foretold — Gabriel Garcia Marquez

By Ahmad Rafat

VENICE — Gabriel Garcia Marquez does not like to talk about it, but at the beginning of this summer, few people would have been willing to bet money on his making old bones. He was diagnosed with lung cancer, and the prospects looked bleak. Now, thanks to a swift operation, and most of all to his own immense will to live, the 64-year-old Colombian writer appears to be on the road to recovery.

By August this year, Garcia Marquez had already embarked on a long tour of Europe. Among his more recent stops was Italy, where he was guest of honour at the Venice Biennale festival, invited to take part in an international conference on movie-writers. After literature and politics, the cinema is one of the great passions of Garcia Marquez. The telegraph operator's son who went on to become one of the world's most highly acclaimed authors was a reporter before he turned his hand to penning novels.

Among his postings as a foreign correspondent was Rome. He left full-time journalism in 1965 to concentrate on his career as a fiction writer. Two years later, he became an overnight success with *"One Hundred Years of Solitude"*, a book that Chilean poet Pablo Neruda was to describe as "the greatest revelation in the Spanish language since the *"Don Quixote"* of Cervantes."

The novel, set in the imaginary community of Macondo on the Colombian coast, traces the lives of several generations of the Buendia family. Although set in a world that is often dream-like and at times supernatural, the book has been taken to be a microcosm and a metaphor for Latin America itself. The first Spanish printing of the novel sold out within a week. So far it has sold more than 10 million copies and been translated into more than 30 languages. In 1982, it won the Nobel Prize for Literature for its author.

Garcia Marquez's public has eagerly awaited each successive book and although none of them has met with the success of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, they have all been well received. Among the best known titles are *Chronicle Of A Death Foretold* — a tale of dishonour and vengeance — and *Love In The Time Of The Cholera*, a witty and often very comic novel which ponders the nature of romanticism and romantic love.



In between working on his long-awaited autobiography, Gabriel Garcia Marquez is touring Europe to present his new book of short stories.

Garcia Marquez's latest book, so far published in Spanish and Italian, is a collection of short stories, with a title that translates into English as *Twelve Pilgrims' Tales*. "It's taken me 18 years to write them," said Garcia Marquez in an interview during his stay in Venice. "Between finishing one short story and starting another, I published *The Autumn of the Patriarch* and *Chronicle Of A Death Foretold*, as well as a few other novels."

Although firmly established among the great modern fiction-writers, Garcia Marquez has never lost his taste for journalism and continues to write political and historical pieces. He has a long history of political involvement and has maintained personal friendships with figures who include Cuban President Fidel Castro, French President Francois Mitterrand and the late Panamanian leader General Omar Torrijos. Following are excerpts from the exclusive interview he gave this correspondent in Venice.

QUESTION: What is your latest book about?

ANSWER: "It is very different from any of my previous books. They are all stories that are set in Europe, even though the protagonists are Latin Americans in each case. Basically, it is the story of the confrontation between these

two worlds."

Q: Does the book contain any of your personal memories of your years in Europe? Are there any episodes that relate to Italy?

A: "It could not have been otherwise. They are all stories based on real life events and on people who lived through these experiences. I came to Italy 32 years ago as a foreign correspondent for a Latin American daily newspaper. I still recall that my first article was a piece about the Venice Film Festival. In the book, these experiences are reflected in three of the stories. One of them is set in Pantelleria (an island off Sicily) and the other two take place in Rome."

Q: In your view, how has Italy's political and cultural climate changed since you were here as a correspondent?

A: "I think that Rome has remained the same since the days of the Empire. In Italy, there have been scandals and corruption for centuries, but things have always gone ahead in spite of that. That is precisely what makes Italy such a diverse and interesting country."

Q: Are you saying that the decline of the Roman Empire is something that is still continuing to this day?

A: "In a sense, yes. To be sure, the international picture has changed, and I think it is time that something began changing in Italy as well."

Q: Going back to your new book, why did you opt for the short-story format? Was it because you found it more relaxing?

A: "For me, it is far more difficult to write a short story than it is to write a novel. Basically, it is the fruit of a long struggle with myself."

Q: For years now, there has been talk about your publishing an autobiography. Where does the project stand?

A: "Between finishing one book and starting the next, I always devote a certain amount of time to working on this project. So far, I have written 200 pages and I am still writing about my childhood. If I carry on at this rate, it will end up being an encyclopedia of 10 or more volumes. Because it is something that is very important to me, and because I am under no deadline pressure from the

publishers, I am trying to give it my very best so that at the end something really interesting will emerge."

Q: Let's talk about politics. What can you tell us about Cuba?

A: "I am a close friend of Fidel Castro, and I am the sort of person who is ready to give everything in the cause of friendship, maybe even my own life. For this reason, I try to avoid talking about Fidel. My views are perhaps not very objective ones."

Q: But you are party to first-hand information about Cuba...

A: "That is true. Basing my observations on this information, I can only underline the existence of a reality of which many people are unaware, or which they choose to ignore... Since the fall of the (Berlin) Wall and the defeat of the East, Cuba has entered a new dimension. It must now seek its own level in the new socio-economic and geopolitical situation in which it finds itself."

Q: What is that dimension?

A: "Today, Cuba is no longer dependent on the East Bloc or on the Soviet Union. It has been forced to follow its own path, which must be a half-way house between socialism and capitalism. Fidel knows and recognises his errors. He even knows that pure unadulterated capitalism is not the answer to his problems, and so he has no choice but to try and buy time while he searches out and builds an alternative path. And it will take a long time for this to happen if the economic blockade continues. The people are behind Fidel, even though they may not conform to the regime."

Q: What are your views on your own home country of Colombia?

A: "Things there are worse than ever. The escape (from prison) of the drug trafficker (Pablo) Escobar was a real blow. But in a country where it is impossible to tell whether a policeman is really a policeman, or whether a soldier is really a soldier, one could hardly expect that a criminal would really be a criminal. Escobar, because he felt threatened in jail. He was scared of being extradited to the United States. I hope the government of my country can give him the assurances he wants that this won't happen, so he can be persuaded to return to jail" — World News Link.

Water puppet theatre is revived in peacetime Vietnam

By Bill Tarrant
Reuters

HANOI — The nearly 900-year-old tradition of water puppet theatre, which had all but died out during Vietnam's four-decade preoccupation with war, is undergoing revival now that the country has found relative tranquility.

Three times a week at a small theatre in Hanoi, a puppet representing the divine town Teu emerges from a pond, fireworks shooting from his hands, and laughing-fryls an audience he has out to Earth to show them how to deal with their problems.

That unfolds is a repertoire of puppet choreography ranging from the sublime dars of the eight fairies, to the spectacular fire-breathing dragon dance, to a slapstick village fishing scene, accompanied by an orchestra of gong, drums and flutes.

The performance depicts timeless scenes of Vietnamese rural life — water buffalo fights and boat races, farming and fishing scenes — interspersed with dances of

mythical animals and legends of great warriors.

"Teu is an archetype of the Vietnamese countryside and represents the optimism of the peasant," said Dang Anh Nga, deputy director of Hanoi's Central Puppetry Theatre.

"He is a way of expressing Vietnamese or Asian Philosophy... that while life seems complicated and full of suffering, a simple puppet has the wisdom to show that life is made easier by making everyday activities seem enjoyable," she said.

That point of view would not have gone down well to people who had to flee to the jungle when war destroyed their villages.

Water puppet shows were rarely staged during Japan's World War II occupation of Vietnam, followed by wars against French colonial rule and intervention by the United States, and finally Hanoi's invasion and occupation of Cambodia.

"There was time when water puppetry was dying out. During wartime, it was dangerous to show water

puppet performances outside where the ponds were," Nga said.

"Water puppets used to be shown only on festival days, and during the war years were not in the mood when bombs were dropping around them," she said.

"Water puppetry can only be shown in a peaceful atmosphere."

Public performances first resumed sporadically in Hanoi in 1987, the year Vietnam proclaimed its policy of "doi moi", or renewal, and began opening up to the world.

Regular shows began only two years ago when foreign tourists began to stream into Vietnam following the Vietnamese withdrawal from Cambodia.

The tradition was born in 1121 when peasants surprised the Vietnamese king while he was boating on a lake near Hanoi with a water puppet performance in honour of his longevity, Nga said.

In the old days, the art form was jealously guarded and handed down through generations of families.

"It used to be a strict rule

that a woman could not be a puppeteer because it was feared that when she got married she would teach the art to her husband's family," Nga said.

The rule is one of the few traditions of water puppetry that has been abandoned in modern times. The Central Puppetry Theatre, for instance, features six men and six women.

A sculptress educated in Czechoslovakia, Nga joined a Hanoi theatre group and began making water puppets in 1965 after graduating with a fine arts degree.

Nga said the theatre does not try to inject modern themes or messages into the performance, unlike the vaguely similar Indonesian Wayang puppet theatre in which the puppet master occasionally makes political or social commentary.

"Our aim is to mould the show as close to the original version as possible," she said.

The puppeteers stand in waist-deep water behind a backdrop of a Vietnamese communal house manipulating the dolls with submerged

sticks.

They wear diving wet suits and eat ginger with sticky rice to stay warm during Hanoi's winter night performances, Nga said.

The theatre is usually packed with tourists and Vietnamese children.

"Foreigners come to see the water puppets because, unlike the dramas, it is not necessary to understand the language and they want to see something that is traditional," Nga said.

Water puppet shows have been performed in Europe, Japan, Australia and India over the past five years, she said.

During the long years of war, the Central Puppetry Theatre sent artists to the Red River delta villages where water puppetry used to flourish so they could learn from village masters and keep the art alive, Nga said.

"Now we have become much more professional and we are sending our puppeteers to the villages to teach them because it had almost died in the countryside," she said.

Is Rome high fashion in ruins?

By Samantha Conti

ROME — Short on cash, famous clients, and big designers, Rome's once-lustrous high fashion shows seem to be fading fast into oblivion.

For 30 years Rome was a world capital of high fashion with designers like Valentino, Ferre, and Capucci decking catwalks and stars like Audrey Hepburn and Ava Gardner gracing guest lists.

Not only did Rome long ago take a back seat to the Paris haute couture shows, it is now having a hard time even attracting buyers' and journalists' attention.

This year, because of a lack of government funds, the shows were nearly cancelled. Although designers will still show their spring and summer collections, from January 18 to 21, the event will not be up to par, says the National Chamber of Fashion.

"We can't even provide one telephone, let alone a press room, for journalists this year," Giuseppe Della Schiava, the chamber's president, told Reuters.

"Of course the lack of money is going to have a bad impact," he said.

The decline of Roman high fashion began in 1989 when

Valentino and Gianfranco Ferre announced they were moving to Paris and would no longer show in Rome.

Gianni Versace, one of Italy's biggest names, snubbed Rome couture altogether and showed his first high-fashion line in the French capital in 1989.

"The level of morale is so low in Rome," said a spokeswoman for Renato Balestra, who has been showing in Rome for over 20 years.

"The Roman shows are just plain sad," Stefano Dominella, partner of the designer Raniero Gattinoni, said there is even a shortage of Italian divas — less in demand than their American counterparts — to give the shows a touch of glamour.

"So many Italian film and television stars these days are so glitzy and vulgar, he said.

"And the shows here need good publicity."

Die-hard, big-name designers like Balestra who have chosen to remain in Rome also blame the Italian government for the show's decline.

"Rome has always been betrayed by Italian politicians," said a spokeswoman for the designer Pino Lancetti. "And, unfortunately, they are the ones who could really

turn the Italian high-fashion industry around with more sponsorship."

Della Schiava said he and the designers had to foot the bill for this week's couture shows because the government has still not come up with over two million dollars it promised to fund last year's couture shows in Rome and ready-to-wear shows in Milan.

"They have promised they will come up with the money," Della Schiava said. "But the government's promises are empty — like a sailor's promises of marriage to the girls in every port."

The big-name designers who have chosen to remain in Rome say they do so out of a sense of loyalty to the city.

"We helped create high fashion in this city and it would be such a pity to abandon it now," said a spokesperson for Balestra.

"Rome is the birthplace of Italian high fashion and it should not be deserted."

But Raniero Gattinoni, whose mother Fernanda dressed Ingrid Bergman, Audrey Hepburn, and Kim Novak in the golden days of Rome couture, says he will leave Rome if the shows continue to run on a shoestring budget.

Iraqi healthcare, once sophisticated, suffers under sanctions

By Thalia Griffiths
Reuters

BAGHDAD — For Iraqi doctors used to working in one of the region's best healthcare systems, the deprivations of more than two years of U.N. sanctions are especially hard to bear.

"We're short of everything," said Chief Doctor Mehdi Mohi at the Qadisiya Hospital in Baghdad's teeming Saddam City district. "We lack even the simplest things."

His staff need drugs, syringes, anaesthetics, sur-

al gowns and parts for machines such as heart monitors. Film shortages mean X-rays are rationed to two a day for a large general hospital serving a community of one million people.

"What we have is running out or wearing out," said Dr. Mohi.

The doctors say the situation is getting worse. Patients whose treatment has been postponed are developing complications, poor diet is taking its toll, and equipment is getting older.

In the children's wards, mothers sit patiently on iron

beds cradling thin babies. A grey-faced three-month old boy with listless eyes lies in an incubator in a corner. "It's his third admission," says Dr. Mohi. "Basically malnourished. We treat him and discharge him and he comes back with something else."

An older boy lies on a thin mattress breathing into a mask. "He's asthmatic," says Dr. Mohi. "He needs hydrocortisone but we have none."

The hospital is virtually empty. Health Minister Ummed Madhat Mubarak said only up to 50 per cent of

capacity was in use as hospitals were admitting only emergency cases to conserve supplies.

United Nations trade sanctions do not bar import of medical supplies or food but the government says that without selling its oil it has no money to pay for them.

It has rejected tough terms laid down by the Security Council to sell some oil to pay for humanitarian supplies as an infringement of its sovereignty.

Mr. Mubarak said giving in to the U.N. terms was worse than putting up with the shortages.

"Of course it is, because the sovereignty and dignity of the person is very important," he told reporters, adding that Iraq would never accept any conditions.

Mr. Mubarak said that of prepaid orders worth \$20 million placed with foreign companies in February 1990, well before the imposition of the blockade, only \$7 million had been received.

He said foreign governments were blocking companies from sending supplies. "We have our old orders with the manufacturers and they

are happy with those orders but the governments are not allowing the manufacturers to send us these things."

Plastic canulas for administration of fluid are in short supply. The doctors say they are using steel needles instead for all but the most acute cases, risking rupturing veins.

They have gone back to using the old-fashioned glass syringes sterilised by boiling as disposable ones are virtually unavailable.

"If we know a patient has a blood disease such as hepatitis, then we use a disposable syringe. The problem is with the ones we don't know about," said Doctor Auday Said.

There is virtually no insulin, and what there is is often out of date.

The eight-bed cardiac unit has two working monitors. The hospital cannot get the spare parts it needs to repair them.

Mr. Mubarak says Iraq used to import medical equipment and drugs worth \$600 million a year, and the aid agencies now are meeting only five to 10 per cent of needs.

U.N. officials agree that the country had one of the best healthcare systems in the Middle East with treatment available for everyone.

"There's no way the U.N. agencies and the NGOs can replace what the government did with billions of dollars of oil revenue," said UNICEF Director Thomas Ekvall.

U.N. figures show infant mortality has shot up to 90 per 1,000 live births in 1991 from less than 30 in 1989 and 1990. Among the under fives, there were 125 deaths per 1,000 in 1991, compared to 80 in 1990 and less than 60 in 1985.

The doctors said malnutrition and its impact on the body's resistance to disease was a major cause of the higher death rate. "The children are the worst affected," said Dr. Mohi. "The adults have more resistance."

Government subsidised rations provide only about a third of monthly needs and market prices have risen by many hundred times since before the war.

Aid workers are seeing cases of malnutrition as well as vaccine-preventable diseases and water-borne illnesses caused by poor sanitation.

UNICEF has begun a campaign to catch up on the lack of vaccination in the past two years by immunising some two million children and women against tuberculosis, whooping cough, diphtheria, tetanus, polio and measles.

The deprivation at Qadisiya Hospital is all the harder to bear because three years ago the doctors had all the equipment they needed. Asked how it feels to work under such conditions, Dr. Said shrugs sadly. "You can imagine," he says.

"Listen, this isn't Somalia. We don't want help, we want to be allowed to go back to helping ourselves as we did before," said a government official.

Aspirin: the greatest medical mystery

As the 1800s dwindled down to a precious few, a German scientist, looking to help his arthritic father, gave the 20th century a present to cure 100 years of headaches, a little white pill called aspirin. Now that same little white pill has become a wonder of the latter decades of the century. It no longer just relieves headaches or the swollen joints of arthritis.

It is now credited with preventing heart attacks and probably strokes.

It seems to act in some way against cancer of the colon. It counters a sometimes fatal hypertension during pregnancy.

It seems to slow the development of cataracts in the elderly.

And it may enhance the ability of the immune system to fight off viruses and bacteria.

Yet in spite of its century-long ubiquity, aspirin remains one of the greatest medical mysteries. No one had an inkling how it worked, what it did inside the body, until 1970 and even now scientists wonder if they know it all.

All through the annals of modern medicine, scientists

and doctors, extol the little white pill.

"In a sense aspirin is as old as medicine because Hippocrates used the leaves and bark of the white willow tree, the extracts from them, to relieve the aches and pains of his patients, which included women in labour... So we've jumped from 500 B.C. to 1900 and in the next 100 years aspirin became the most widely used drug in the world."

In 1948, when modern aspirin was only 50 years old, a search of the medical literature came up with 4,000 published reports on aspirin. In just 10 years, from 1975 to 1986, there were 4,000 more.

In short, science is still probing and finding more effects of the little white pill.

Not all the effects are virtuous. Scientists knew early on that aspirin irritated the stomach and found ways to coat it or buffer it so it would pass through to the intestines without causing harm.

Then in 1963, an Australian pathologist named R.D.K. Reye implicated aspirin in a strange disorder which was given his name. In Reye's syndrome, some children recovering from influen-

za or chickenpox who took aspirin began to vomit and later showed signs of brain involvement ranging from sleepiness to aggressive behaviour.

Though aspirin was not shown to be causative, the evidence was strong enough in 1986 for the British Committee on Safety of Medicine to recommend that aspirin not be given to children under the age of 12 except on a physician's advice.

But in any case, the occurrence of Reye's syndrome is rare.

Aspirin is a non-prescription drug proving itself useful against ailments that require prescribable remedies.

"The more we learn about the science, how it interacts in the body, there may be even more uses," says Dr. Thomas Bryant.

Insights into aspirin's marvels pile one upon the other. Twice it won researchers Nobel Prizes.

In 1970, John Vane, working with colleagues of London's Royal College of Surgeons, showed that small amounts of aspirin irreversibly block an enzyme in blood platelets that are responsible

for the platelets sticking together, which is the process by which blood clots. It is also part of the process which makes blood vessels clog and leads to heart attacks and strokes. Vane won his Nobel Prize in 1982.

Another Nobel Prize-winning discovery by Bengt Samuelsson of Stockholm's Karolinska Institute uncovered another of aspirin's actions. He and others, including Vane, found hormone-like chemicals called prostaglandins in the prostate gland, hence the name. It turned out these chemicals are almost as ubiquitous as aspirin. They are produced throughout the body and affect everything from digestion and reproduction to circulation and the immune system.

Excess production of prostaglandins causes myriad ailments, headaches, fever, blood clots, menstrual cramps, inflammation and some aberrations in the immune response.

Scientists then discovered that aspirin thwarts the production of prostaglandins, which explains why it works against so many of those ailments.

This years scientists from

the Boston University School of Medicine reported another role of aspirin. They studied more than 1,300 patients with colon or rectal cancer and concluded that aspirin's anti-prostaglandin ability may play a role in stymieing development of those cancers.

Regular use of aspirin, they reported in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute, may significantly lower the risk of bowel cancer.

Probably the most significant finding is that "an aspirin a day" regimen reduces the possibility of heart attack. It also prevents a second heart attack and dramatically reduces the chance of death.

Dr. Richard Peto of Oxford University, who works with the Harvard team, says that half an aspirin a day would save 10,000 lives a year for every million people treated.

"The curse is," he observed ruefully, "that the drug is so bloody cheap that nobody takes it seriously."

The Harvard team has assembled 22,071 physicians in what is called the Physicians' Health Study to better understand the limits of aspirin therapy. They asked the question, "What about the apparently healthy person?"

Initial results show a 44 per cent decrease in first heart attack among middle-aged men.

But considering that 936,000 Americans die every year of cardiovascular disease, the impact can be considerable.

The same Harvard team has assembled a separate study group composed of almost 88,000 women from 30 to 55. Called the Nurses' Health Study, its early results conclude that the use of one to six aspirin a week apparently reduces the risk of first heart attack among women. The group is the subject of a randomised trial in which women over 50 will be given low-dose aspirin — less than a baby aspirin a day to measure more precisely the effects.

The American Cancer Society drew on its ongoing mortality study called the Cancer Prevention Study II, composed of about 662,000 men and women. By analysing their self-reported use of drugs, the researchers concluded that "regular aspirin use at low doses may reduce the risk of fatal colon cancer."

It confirms a laboratory study in which aspirin and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs were found to inhibit colon tumours in rodents. But clearly a randomised, double-blind study, in which some people get aspirin or other anti-inflammatories and some do not, is indicated for more definite results.

So her research team gave volunteers colds by having them inhale cold viruses. The patients were then locked up in a hotel for five days and fed by room service, given aspirin, and their nasal mucous, tissue use and fevers were measured, as well as their interferon and interleukin production.

Unfortunately, it did not show any benefit from the aspirin so far as the cold symptoms or transmission was concerned.

This article is reprinted from the Tehran Times.

Study links low cholesterol to symptoms of depression

NEW YORK (AP) — Men over age 70 with low cholesterol are three times as likely to show signs of depression than those with higher cholesterol, according to a preliminary study of 1,020 men.

If the connection is confirmed, researchers said, cholesterol-lowering regimens such as diet or drugs may be necessary only for people at high risk of heart disease.

"We are not suggesting people start hunking up on cholesterol to improve their mood," said Lawrence Palinkas, associate professor in the Department of Community and Family Medicine at the University of California, San Diego.

"Certainly individuals with high cholesterol at risk of heart disease should continue to follow the guidelines from physicians about the reduction of cholesterol," said Prof. Palinkas in a telephone interview.

The study is published in the latest issue of the Lancet, a British medical journal.

The findings are limited to men. Prof. Palinkas said his

team also studied about 1,200 women and found no link between low cholesterol and depression.

Dr. Graham Colditz, associate professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School, called the study well researched and offering "exciting" preliminary results.

"It's early to be making recommendations with regards to cholesterol-lowering based on this one study," said Dr. Colditz. "It may suggest, if confirmed in other studies, there may be a subgroup of people for whom lowering cholesterol is not advantageous and may in fact be disadvantageous."

Prof. Palinkas and his colleagues used data from a community-based health survey in California conducted between 1972 and 1974. At that time, doctors asked volunteers about their medical history, smoking and alcohol consumption. They also took blood samples to measure cholesterol, the substance that shuttles fat back-and-forth between the blood and storage areas.

Between 1985 and 1987,

doctors re-analysed 1,020 men, ages 50 to 89. They did another health survey, measured cholesterol again, and assessed symptoms of depression using a standard test called the Beck depression inventory.

The researchers divided men into four categories of cholesterol: Cholesterol lower than 160 milligrams per deciliter was considered low; between 160 to 199, normal; from 200 to 239 borderline; and above 240, high.

Among men 70 years and older, 16.4 per cent of 75 men in the bottom category for cholesterol suffered symptoms of depression compared with 5.2 per cent of 540 men with higher cholesterol.

According to this psychological test — "focusing on mood, appetite, and sleep patterns — men who score 13 points or more are thought to suffer from mild to severe symptoms of depression," said Prof. Palinkas. It does not mean high-scorers necessarily suffer from depressive disorder, a psychiatric diagnosis, he said.

Paperwork costs U.S. health industry billions

By Mariann Caprino
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — For all its sophistication and ingenuity, the U.S. health care industry has a low-tech problem — paper.

Sorting, shuffling and processing billions of pieces of paper costs at least \$40 billion a year. Some say it's more like \$90 billion, or about double the U.S. annual trade deficit with Japan.

It's driving health care costs higher along with lofty doctors' fees, pricey medical technology and expensive drugs.

"It's a bad problem," said Richard Landen, spokesman for the Health Insurance Association of America, a trade group. "People — the payers, patients, doctors, hospitals — are drowning in paperwork."

The 4 billion medical claims generated each year appear on more than 450 different forms. Hospitals have their own formats for documenting services, and doctors use a standard form only 40 per cent of the time.

The problem is aggravated by insurers who require slightly different bits of information. "Medicare (the U.S. government plan) needs information Blue Cross (a private insurer) doesn't need," Landen said.

The first step in slashing processing costs — as well as eliminating inefficiencies like lost records — is developing

standard electronic forms. A bigger challenge is getting them into widespread use.

While that process is well under way, a paperless medical system still seems elusive.

"We hope to establish a single, voluntary national standard that makes enough sense for everyone to use without government regulation forcing it down our throats," Landen said.

Several standards for electronic forms, including patient bills, have been approved by the American National Standards Institute, the federally sanctioned body that handles such matters.

Electronic transfers of money — from an insurer to a hospital, for example — is another goal.

The Workgroup For Electronic Data Interchange, a health industry coalition formed at government request, has called for major insurers and hospitals to have the ability to communicate electronically by the end of 1994.

Some think that's optimistic. "Electronic submission has become popular, but the bulk of claims will continue being manually submitted for a long time," said Tom Farley, a management consultant at Foster Higgins, a health-benefits consulting firm.

Farley said the inefficiency of paper is "incredible. As much as 25 to 30 per cent of the staff in claim shops is

associated with nothing more than just moving paper. These people contribute nothing but the recording of paper."

Major commercial insurers, which handle only a fraction of the nation's health claims, are receiving only 5 per cent to 10 per cent of claims electronically, although many are slowly increasing the percentage.

Travellers Insurance Co., for example, which processes about 21.5 million claims or 10 per cent of its total electronically each year, plans to process about half by 1994, said company president Joseph Brophy.

"It's not an overnight thing," said Brophy, who heads the electronic data coalition.

Others are facing better. Medicare handles nearly 90 per cent of hospital bills electronically. Blue Cross of Michigan is processing an average 60 per cent of claims electronically, up from 41 per cent two years ago.

"It's not rocket science," Brophy said. "The technology is in place."

In Detroit, hospitals, doctors and laboratories set by computer nearly 75 per cent of the claims Blue Cross of Michigan receives. Electronic submission saves three to five days off processing time.

"We've been working at this for the better part of 12 years," said spokesman Rudy Difazio.

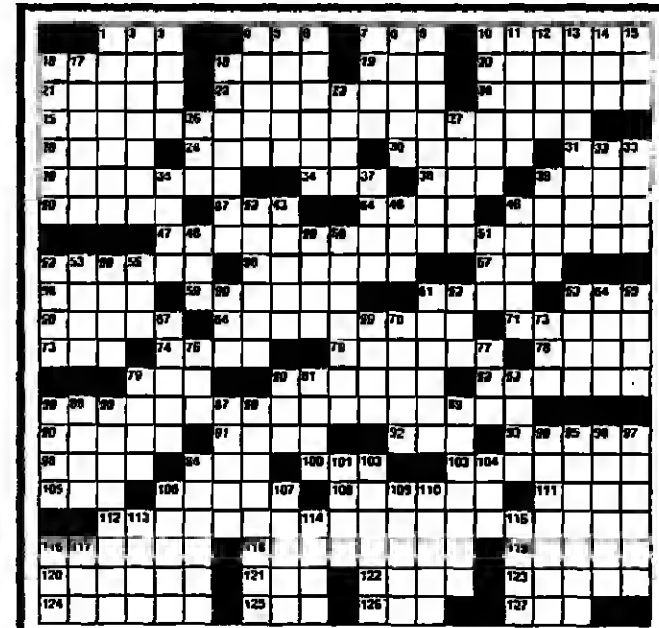
WEEKEND CROSSWORD

FEATHERED FRIENDS

By Charles R. Woodard

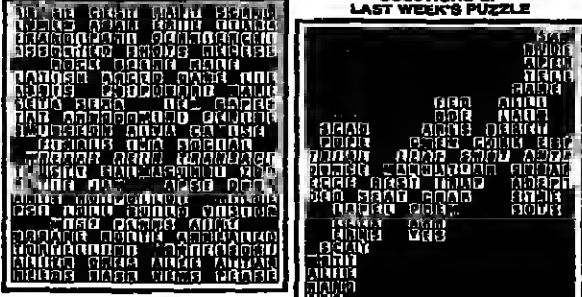
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1. Youthful proprietor of pretty little lemonade stand offers discounts to astute customers on Thursdays and Fridays.
2. Cliche warns a watched pot never boils, but watch it! An unwatched pot is sure to boil over.
3. Whirlwind whisks away whiskey-drinking whistle blower to secret headquarters in D.C.
4. American piper could peddle popped popcorn on Piedmont plateau.

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لجلا

Cooperation, application of law and indiscrimination can safeguard Muslims of Europe

Following is the address on Islam in Europe delivered by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Wednesday at the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung Foundation in Bonn.

Islam is not new to Europe or the European political scene, but the attention it has been attracting since the inception of the 1980s is a new phenomenon. It is viewed as a social and cultural phenomenon at worst, it is seen as a threat to the stability and unity of political order. These perceptions are part and parcel of the baggage of history.

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It is an aspect of the problem which is shared by all peoples of a rich spiritual heritage. It is centered on the quest to achieve a viable synthesis between compliance with the basic demands of the faith on the one hand, and the requirements of contemporary life on the other. Attempts have been made to fuse these divergent requirements for the establishment of an acceptable consensus to govern the presence of Muslim communities in European societies.

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It is incumbent on all Muslims to utilise all means of legal protection afforded to them under European laws to protect their religious beliefs without impinging on other people's rights. The force of the law must apply to them as much as to any other religious or ethnic minority.

Cooperation between the national authorities and their Muslim communities is essential to the success of this enterprise. Democratic and legal procedures are flexible enough to provide accommodation for basic Muslim demands. Reforming laws rather than breaking them is the way for their achievement. There is no reason why some legal problems between Muslims, especially those concerned with matters of personal status, could not be resolved through the application of religious principles and values within a European legal-cultural context.

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JORDAN PHOSPHATE MINES CO., LTD. INVITATION TO TENDERS

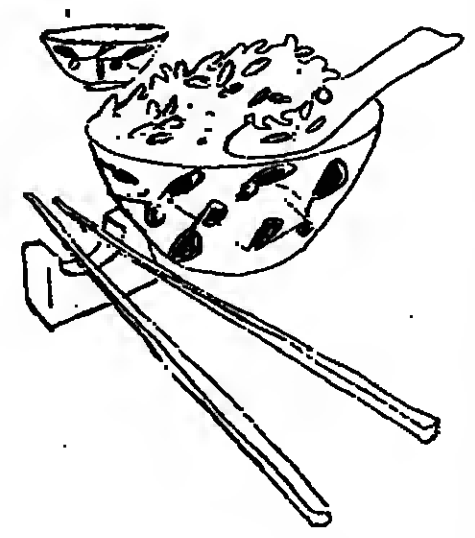
JPMC announces the invitation to tender No. 9F/93 (for the supply, supervision of erection and commissioning of two units of bulldozer, one unit wheel dozer, one unit front-end-loader, and one unit motor grader, for Eshidiya mine).

10F/93 (for the supply, supervision of erection and commissioning of one unit of bulldozer, two units of front-end loader of 5M3, and one unit of front-end-loader of 1.5.M3, for Al-Hassa and Al-Abiad mines).

The tender documents are available at JPMC offices in Amman. Tender Section. Application for documents should be accompanied by a non-refundable fee of JDs (150) for each set of tender documents. The closing date for submission tenders is 12:00 hours local time Wednesday 3rd March 1993.

Thabet Al-Taher
Managing Director

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The world can do without oil

LONDON (R) — The Greenpeace environmentalist lobby group has said world oil use could be halved within 40 years and it urged prompt measures to achieve this.

It published an advance version of an 18-month study called "Energy Without Oil," adding that it brought it forward because of this month's tanker wreck in Britain's Shetland Islands. The tanker Braer split its cargo

around a wildlife paradise. If people wanted an end to such incidents "the decision to begin to get out of oil needs to be taken now," said Stewart Boyle, Greenpeace director of energy policy.

He said the new study showed "the world can do without oil." Technical options were available and "the transition would not bankrupt economies." But political will was lacking.

Greenpeace found that 70 per

cent of research money on energy went on developing fossil fuels — oil, coal and gas.

But only 12 per cent went on renewable energy and on conservation through more efficient use of fuel.

The Greenpeace study envisaged oil being phased out through major gains in energy efficiency in transport and the generation of electricity.

It said technology could create

cars that would do almost 160 kilometres per gallon from an average around 25 now.

But governments would need to tax fossil fuels and end tax breaks on oil exploration, Greenpeace said. They should set high efficiency standards for vehicles.

The world now uses almost 70 million barrels of oil a day. The West's International Energy Agency sees demand rising by 1.0 per cent in 1993.

French drug firm Sanofi to absorb Yves St. Laurent

PARIS (R) — French drugs and perfumes firm ELF Sanofi is to take control of fashion-of-fragrance house Yves Saint-Laurent (YSL) to form the world's third largest beauty products group, the two companies have said.

L'Oréal and Estée Lauder, both French headquartered, will still be ahead of the combined group, but not by much. Sanofi Chairman Jean-Francois Delbecq said a new conference.

Sanofi, whose perfume and beauty brands include Yves Rocher, Nina Ricci, Van Cleef Arpels, Oscar de la Renta and Roger et Gallet, will swap four of its own shares for five YSL shares.

YSL's present owners will end up holding 8.7 per cent of the new group, while Sanofi's parent, state-controlled ELF Aquitaine, will see its stake in Sanofi fall to 51.5 per cent from 60.85 per cent.

YSL managing director Pierre Berge said the deal kept the renowned fashion house in French hands.

"Many people wanted Yves Saint Laurent, a lot of foreigners too... I took the decision with Yves Saint Laurent himself... and I don't think we'll regret it," he said.

YSL's clothing side will remain under the wing of Yves Saint Laurent, YSL's founder and designer, and Berge. They will sub-

scribe to a capital increase reserved for YSL Couture, which Berge will continue to manage. One share analyst was concerned about the deal from Sanofi's viewpoint. Peter McDougall, European pharmaceuticals analyst at London stockbroker Barclays de Zoete Wedd (BZW), said Sanofi was paying a high price to go into a business that was in poor shape and that would distract its management from the critical task of consolidating a recent alliance with U.S. firm Sterling Drug.

Non-oil sectors boost UAE growth

ABU DHABI (R) — The economy of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), traditionally dominated by the oil sector, grew by 4.8 per cent in 1992 because of higher government investment in the non-oil economy.

Planning ministry figures showed that in 1992 the non-oil economy contributed more to gross domestic product (GDP) than the oil sector for the third straight year.

The Emirates News Agency quoted UAE Planning Minister Humaid Bin Ahmad Al Mulla as saying he expected commerce and industry to keep growing in 1993.

"The (non-oil) sector recorded high growth rates. This shows the government's seriousness in developing the non-oil sector and creating new sources of income," Sheikh Humaid said.

The non-oil sector has grown from 34 per cent of GDP in 1990 to about 60 per cent in 1992.

"The oil sector, which represented 42 per cent of GDP in 1991, has declined. The other sectors registered high growth rates" in 1992, the minister said.

Sheikh Humaid said the transport, communications, agriculture, industry and trade sectors grew by between three and eight per cent in 1992.

"This year, the UAE is expected to see high growth rates, especially in the non-oil sectors, including trade and industry," he added.

Algeria approves '93 budget, deficit doubled

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria has approved a 168.3 billion dinar (\$7.5 billion) deficit budget for 1993, more than double the estimated deficit for 1993, more than double the estimated deficit for last year.

The official news agency APS said the finance law for 1993 was signed by head of state Ali Kafi after a cabinet meeting.

It set estimated expenditure at 503.9 billion dinars (\$22.4 billion) against total receipts of 335.6 billion dinars (\$14.9 billion).

The official journal in October gave provisional figures for 1992 revenue at 322.7 billion dinars (\$14.4 billion) and expenditure of 396.8 billion dinars (\$17.7 billion). The financial year is from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31.

The budget deficit for 1992 was estimated at 74 billion dinars (\$3.3 billion), after a surplus in 1991 of eight billion dinars (\$355 million).

Algeria dramatically increased spending in sensitive areas. The latest annual inflation figure, for the year to last October, stood at 33.6 per cent.

Spending on defence jumped to 29.8 billion dinars (\$1.3 billion) from 19.6 billion (\$871 million) and the budget of the interior ministry, largely responsible for internal security, rose by over 50 per cent to 18.7 billion dinars (\$834 million).

The justice ministry budget also rose to 2.9 billion dinars (\$129 million) from 1.9 billion (\$84 million).

Spending on education, health, religious and social affairs all rose.

Increased spending in religious affairs reflects the state's perceived need to train "mus" (preachers) and take full control of the country's 10,000 mosques.

Many of these, until a clamp-down last year amid widespread unrest, were used by fundamentalists to spread their demands for an Islamic state and defiance of the authorities.

The budget follows a warning by the government this month that the next two years would be "difficult, a phase of austerity characterised by very rigorous management."

Prime Minister Belaid Abdoul Salam late last year also warned that he needed three years to get the economy on the right path.

Financial Markets			
Jordan Times in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank			
Control Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin			
Date: 19/1/93			
Currency	Buy	Offer	
U.S. Dollar	0.667	0.669	
Sterling Pound	1.0651	1.0704	
Deutsche Mark	0.4252	0.4273	
Swiss Franc	0.4644	0.4667	
French Franc	0.1257	0.1265	
Japanese Yen	0.5470	0.5497	
Dutch Guilder	0.3783	0.3802	
Swedish Krona	0.0954	0.0959	
Italian Lira	0.0463	0.0465	
Belgian Franc	0.02045	0.02075	
Other Currencies			
Currency	Buy	Offer	
Bahraini Dinar	1.7930	1.8150	
Lebanese Lira	0.03700	0.03875	
Saudi Riyal	0.1829	0.1836	
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.2300	2.2870	
Qatari Riyal	0.1860	0.1872	
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2150	
Omani Riyal	1.7500	1.7720	
UAE Dirham	0.1860	0.1872	
Greek Drachma	0.5137	0.5237	
Cypriot Pound	1.4290	1.4490	

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

(Tourist rates will differ from those quoted):

One U.S. dollar	1.2780/85	Canadian dollar
	1.6060/70	Deutschmarks
	1.8060/70	Dutch guilders
	1.4680/90	Swiss francs
	33.05/09	Belgian francs
	5.4300/50	French francs
	1465/1470	Italian lire
	124.85/90	Japanese yen
	7.1700/800	Swedish crowns
	6.7900/800	Norwegian crowns
	1.5505/15	Danish crowns
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Clinton set to make U.S. currency a winner in 1993, survey shows

LONDON (R) — President Bill Clinton will make the dollar a winner on foreign exchange markets in his first year in office, a survey by Reuters of 30 leading private economists in Europe suggests.

The survey, conducted in European financial centres, found on average that the economists expected the U.S. currency to gain 13 pence against the mark this year.

Economists said economic recovery in the United States this year, coupled with falls in German interest rates, would make the dollar a haven for international funds.

Tony Baron, chief economist at Sakura Finance, said German rates would be cut aggressively in 1993, making the dollar more attractive. The dollar's progress on the markets has been hampered over the past year by the high yield on the mark.

"The U.S. is in a recovery cycle while Germany is going into a deep recession, possibly deeper than the markets currently expect," Mr. Baron added.

The survey showed forecasts for the dollar-mark rate ranging from 1.55 to 1.90 marks, with around three-quarters expecting between 1.70 marks and 1.80 marks by the end of the year. The dollar hit an all-time low of 1.3860 marks on Sept. 2 last year, after a high for 1992 of 1.6860 marks last March.

On average, the economists expect the dollar to stand close to its current level of 125 yen at the end of 1993, with forecasts ranging from 115 yen to 136 yen. In early afternoon trading in Europe Tuesday, the dollar stood at

1.6160 marks and 125.55 yen respectively.

But economists said any appreciation of the dollar against the mark might not come until the second half of the year.

Tony Norfield, economist at Hill Samuel, said that initial optimism surrounding an immediate dollar rally has wilted.

"The dollar appreciated sharply over the new year but has now largely stalled," Mr. Norfield said. He said the more cautious outlook reflected the modest outlook for U.S. recovery and the scaling down of President Clinton's campaign promises for the economy.

The poll also asked if the Clinton administration would be likely to adopt a regime of managed exchange rates reminiscent of the Group of Seven's Plaza and Louvre accords of 1985 and 1987 respectively.

An overwhelming 90 per cent of the economists did not foresee such an eventuality with only 10 per cent believing it possible if the dollar trades upwards too strongly.

"I think the Clinton administration may move the other way because currency parts of that kind have proved a complete waste of time," said Mark Brett, bond and currency analyst at Barclays de Zoete Wedd.

Another Reuters survey issued shows only one of 30 leading private economists canvassed in Europe expects President Clinton to achieve a campaign promise to halve the yawning U.S. budget deficit by 1996.

The annual deficit is currently running at more than \$300 billion and has cast a shadow over Mr.

Clinton's economic plans.

The survey suggested Mr. Clinton's presidency would boost the dollar but it provided a downbeat assessment of the U.S. economy's growth prospects this year, with 83 per cent of the economists surveyed expecting it to recover only slowly.

Three economists in the survey said U.S. growth would gather steam this year but two expected it to lose momentum completely.

On average the economists expected the U.S. economy to grow by just 2.8 per cent in 1993 — sluggish for an economy recovering from recession and much slower than the five to six per cent growth seen after previous U.S. recessions.

Reuters contacted the 30 economists in London and continental European centres Monday asking them a series of questions on the prospects for the economy and the dollar.

"Clinton will inherit low inflation, a patchy and rather feeble recovery and a huge budget deficit," said Mr. Baron.

In a supplementary question, the survey found 97 per cent of the economists believe Mr. Clinton will fail to reduce the budget deficit in his first year in power, leaving him with scant room to manoeuvre if he wants to introduce a fiscal package to boost U.S. growth.

Economists said Mr. Clinton's best chance of cutting the deficit is simply to ensure the U.S. economy secures sustainable growth in coming years. That would boost government revenues and the deficit would shrink in relation to the economy's output.

A majority of the economists surveyed expect the deficit to stand below current levels by the end of Mr. Clinton's four-year term in office. But most of these expected it to still stand at \$250 billion or higher.

A majority of them — 63 per cent — believe there is no need for Mr. Clinton to introduce a fiscal package to boost U.S. growth, not least because of the burgeoning deficit.

But many believe he may introduce a package worth a net \$20 billion to \$25 billion simply as a modest political gesture.

But a tax-cutting exercise for middle-income earners promised by Mr. Clinton or the campaign trail is a non-starter, economists said. Not one of those surveyed now expects such cuts.

In the present economic climate, the new administration simply cannot afford to cut income taxes, said Marie Owens, Thomson International economist at National Global Markets.

The survey also signalled concern about trade issues. Nearly two-thirds of the economists said the Clinton administration was more likely to move towards protectionist policies than the outgoing Bush team.

On average the economists expected the U.S. Federal Reserve funds rate, the overnight rate but even higher, to rise to 3.4 per cent from a current rate of three per cent by the end of 1993.

Just over half the economists expect a rise in U.S. short-term interest rates this year, with most expecting an upward move in the second half of the year.

India plans big alumina export growth

BOMBAY (R) — Indian companies are planning to triple the country's alumina output to exploit large bauxite reserves in the eastern state of Orissa.

At least three big export-oriented projects, all involving some form of foreign collaboration or joint venture, are planned to eventually produce 2.9 million tonnes of alumina a year. Their total cost is estimated at 2.2 billion.

"Orissa will be a major alumina producer by the turn of the century," said G.V. Kasargod, general manager for planning and development with engineering company Larsen Toubro (LT).

The projects, expected to start production from 1997, will triple Orissa's output of alumina — an aluminium oxide, used to make aluminium — from the present level of 1.3 million tonnes to at least 4.2 million, industry sources said.

The 100 per cent export-oriented projects will exploit huge reserves of bauxite or aluminium ore in Orissa, which has around 1,500 million tonnes of India's estimated 2,900 million

tonnes of bauxite deposits.

L.T., India's largest engineering company, has discussed collaboration with several foreign companies, Mr. Kasargod said in an interview.

They include the aluminium Co. of America, Pechiney Aluminium, a unit of France's pechiney S.A., and Aluminise of Switzerland, Mr. Kasargod added.

"We are looking for a financial tie-up. We have completed the first round of discussions and expect to finalise within 15-18 months," he added.

L.T. is planning a two-phase development to produce 500,000 tonnes of alumina, rising to one million tonnes after four years. The initial cost is 16.5 billion rupees (\$335 million) for the first phase, possibly reaching 23 billion rupees (\$460 million) in the second phase.

L.T. Chairman S.S. Marathe said in September funds for the new investment would come from an issue of debentures, loans and internal reserves.

Apart from L.T., both the National Aluminium Company

(NALCO) and Indian Aluminium (Indal) are planning major alumina projects in Orissa.

NALCO, India's largest producer of alumina, is planning 900,000-tonne alumina refinery in collaboration with Hydro Aluminium of Norway, according to NALCO Chairman S.N. Jorhi.

State-run NALCO produced 672,000 tonnes of alumina in the year to March 1992.

The new refinery, which will use bauxite from NALCO's existing mines in the Koraput district of Orissa, will require investment of around \$800 million.

Indal, which is almost 40 per cent owned by Alcan Aluminium of Canada, is planning a one million tonne plant, drawing from the Baphimali deposit in Orissa.

It has teamed up with Tata Industries, part of India's largest business group. Industry sources estimate the investment at more than 20 billion rupees (\$770 million).

Industry experts say India, which has large bauxite reserves but an energy shortage, should focus on exports.

Converting alumina to alumi-

nium is highly energy intensive. Mr. Kasargod said export markets for alumina in the Middle East and Europe, including Russia.

He saw a natural tie-up with energy-rich countries in the Middle East which could reexport aluminium back to India.

"Everybody in the Gulf is putting up a refinery," he said.

India is forecast to produce 520,000 tonnes of alumina in the year to March 93 — 75,000 tonnes more than domestic requirement — but there may be a shortfall of 200,000 tonnes against demand by the turn of the century, industry analysts say.

Despite depressed world aluminium prices, analysts expect world consumption of the metal to grow by an average 3.4 per cent a year until the end of the century.

Much of the increase will come in the second half of the decade from the packaging and automotive industries, when the Indian aluminium projects are starting to come on stream, Mr. Kasargod said.

Romania's premier sees recession ending by July

BUCHAREST (R) — Romanian Prime Minister Nicolae Vacaroin has rejected criticism that his left-wing government was stalling on reforms and said that the country's three-year-long recession could end within six months.

"The latest development confirm our hope that we will be able to stop the economy from shrinking in the first half of 1993," Mr. Vacaroin told a news conference.

Mr. Vacaroin rejected opposition accusations that his minority government, which took office after parliamentary polls last September, was dithering on market economy moves launched after the 1989 collapse of communist rule.

"We want to accelerate reforms and switch to a free-market system as soon as possible," he said.

The government would shortly present a four-year strategy of economic reform, aiming to resume growth as part of efforts to

put the economy on a free-market footing.

He also said the government would introduce value added tax (VAT) starting in July as part of a package of laws to promote key market reforms, which the government would submit to parliament next month.

"VAT introduction in July will mark a big step towards our market economy goal," Mr. Vacaroin said.

He said signs that industrial output could pick up in the first quarter of 1993 were already coming from both state-owned industries and from joint ventures with big Western firms.

Latest data for 1992 that 11-month industrial output fell 22.24 per cent from the same period of the previous year.

Mr. Vacaroin singled out domestic production of tractors and farming equipment as well as metallurgy, which he said could see a growth of 20 to 25 per cent in the first half of this year.

Joint ventures in light and petrochemical industries and contracts with big Western oil companies to modernise Romania's refineries were also helping the projected upturn in production.

The government was planning to introduce new tax breaks to stimulate reinvestment of profits and an upsurge in exports, to wipe out the trade deficit, he said.

Final trade figures for 1992 were not yet available, but a senior government official said in a recent interview with Reuters that the balance of trade deficit was now between \$700 million and \$1 billion.

Rotterdam sees sharp rise in oil tanker defects

ROTTERDAM (R) — Rotterdam's port authority has said there had been a sharp increase in the number of oil tankers entering the harbour with safety problems.

Routine inspections were now showing 20 to 25 defects a month, a rise of nearly a third in three years, a port authority spokesman said.

He said the increase was mainly due to ageing of the world's tankers. Ten per cent of which were estimated to be over 18 years old.

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WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

U.K. to withdraw troops from Korea

LONDON (R) — Britain said Wednesday it was withdrawing its remaining troops from the United Nations contingent in Korea, ending a more than four-decade commitment. A Defence Ministry spokesman said the 36 soldiers and one officer would leave Korea by the middle of March as part of Britain's gradual winding down of its garrison in Hong Kong. The British soldiers in the U.N. Honour Guard, which the spokesman said performed largely ceremonial duties in the capital Seoul and did not police the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea, were rotated there from Hong Kong. The spokesman said the decision, taken earlier this week, was also in line with Britain's changing global commitments. British troops have participated in the U.N. contingent since the 1950-53 Korean War.

Haiti annuls one Senate race

PORT-AU-PRINCE (R) — Haitian officials annulled a Senate race in the capital Tuesday because ballot boxes were dumped in the streets, but they said counting continued in the other races despite a voter boycott of Monday's elections. Voters generally ignored the voting, which was designed to favour supporters of the military-backed government and was carried out over the objections of diplomats trying to broker a solution to Haiti's political crisis. Electoral Council President Balhazar St. Fort-Lin told Radio Metropole the vote had been annulled in the West Department, the province that includes the capital, Port-Au-Prince.

NATO commander to visit Russia

BRUSSELS (AP) — NATO's top military commander will visit Moscow this month in a bid to strengthen cooperation between the alliance and its former foe, NATO officials said Wednesday. Gen. John M. Shalikashvili is scheduled to arrive in Moscow Jan. 27 for a three-day visit at the invitation of Russian Defence Minister Gen. Pavel Grachev. NATO officials said the general's visit will boost efforts to promote military cooperation with Russia and other former Soviet-Bloc nations. Officials declined to give details of proposals Gen. Shalikashvili plans to present to senior military and political leaders from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). At a December meeting in Brussels, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) agreed to cooperate with Russia and 15 other East European nations in preparing for possible joint-peacekeeping operations to Europe. Gen. Shalikashvili will be making his first visit to Moscow since taking over as supreme allied commander Europe last year. He is also scheduled to hold talks with military commanders in St. Petersburg.

Clinton aide admits breaking law

WASHINGTON (R) — Zoe Baird, President Bill Clinton's choice as the first U.S. woman attorney general, said she knew she was breaking the law when she hired two illegal aliens from Peru to work in her home. She told senators she took full responsibility for the action. Ms. Baird said she realised she had been in violation of the law when she and her husband, Yale University constitutional law professor Paul Gewirtz, hired the Peruvian wife and husband as a baby sitter and driver, and did not pay social security taxes on their wages. The taxes were paid only after Ms. Baird's Dec. 24 nomination to become attorney general, although she disclosed the controversy to the Clinton transition team. "The hiring of this couple and the failure to pay social security taxes was wrong and I take full responsibility for it," Ms. Baird told the Senate Judiciary Committee, which was holding confirmation hearings Tuesday. "I deeply regret it. I respectfully ask you to view this in the context of my overall record," she said. The matter is expected to delay but not derail Ms. Baird's approval by the full U.S. Senate.

FBI director reprimanded

WASHINGTON (AP) — FBI Director William Sessions was reprimanded for a clear pattern of "taking advantage of the government" and ordered to reimburse the Treasury for improperly billing the FBI for personal expenses, according to documents released Tuesday. Before he left office last week, former Attorney General William Barr found that Mr. Sessions had abused his position as head of the FBI to take personal trips at government expense and to install a privacy fence around his house for nearly \$10,000 that did nothing to enhance his security. Mr. Barr's Jan. 15 memo to Mr. Sessions outlining his findings was released by the Justice Department along with a 160-page report of the investigation conducted by the agency's Office of Professional Responsibility. The investigation found that Mr. Sessions obtained a sham exemption from paying taxes on the income he should have reported for the use of an executive limousine to transport him to and from work at FBI Headquarters.

French Socialists 'face landslide loss'

PARIS (AP) — The governing Socialists are headed for a decisive loss to their conservative rivals in March legislative elections, according to a poll released Tuesday. The survey of 1,000 French adults, conducted Jan. 7-9 for Le Figaro newspaper by the Sofres Polling Agency, indicated the Socialists and allied parties would attract only 21 per cent of the vote in the first round of the elections, versus 41 per cent for the main opposition parties. The survey indicated that the Rally for the Republic and Union for French Democracy together would win 439 of the 555 seats in the National Assembly, against 83 for Socialists and their allies, 28 for the Communist Party, four for ecology parties, and one for the far-right National Front. The Figaro-Sofres Poll, which gave no margin of error, said 68 per cent of those surveyed disapproved of the Socialists' record in office, compared to 22 per cent who approved.

U.S. starts probe of German doctor

NEW YORK (R) — The U.S. Justice Department has begun a probe of Hans Sewering, the German president-elect of the World Medical Association, to see if he should be barred from entering the United States because of his Nazi past. In a letter Tuesday to the World Jewish Congress (WJC), Neal Sher, head of the Justice Department Nazi-hunting Office of Special Investigations, said he had already begun a probe of Dr. Sewering, a former member of the SS who is alleged to have sent a 14-year-old tuberculosis victim to a Nazi euthanasia centre in 1943. Mr. Sher's office has the power to place Dr. Sewering, 76, on the Justice Department's "watch list," which prohibits persons who aided the Nazis from entering the country. Former U.N. Security-General and Austrian President Kurt Waldheim was placed on the list amid controversy over his war time activities as a member of the German army in the Balkans.

Disabled man executed in U.S.

JARRATT, Va. (AP) — A disabled death-row inmate was executed in Virginia's electric chair Tuesday night for the slayings of three workers at the restaurant where he was a short-order cook. Charles Stamper, 39, was pronounced dead at 11:15 p.m. (0415 GMT) at Greensville Correctional Centre, said Wayne Brown, the prison's operations officer. Mr. Brown said prison guards held Mr. Stamper by the shoulders and helped him walk to the electric chair. Mr. Stamper had requested to use leg braces and a walker so he could take the last few steps on his own, but prison officials earlier had said the request was unlikely to be granted because it would be too cumbersome. Stamper was on death row longer than any other Virginia inmate. He had used a wheelchair since his spinal cord was injured in a 1988 fight with other inmates. Earlier Tuesday, U.S. District Judge James R. Spencer and the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals had refused to halt the execution. The U.S. Supreme Court denied the request without comment Tuesday evening.

Bosnian Serb parliament accepts peace plan

PALE, Bosnia-Herzegovina

(AP) — Bosnian Serb self-proclaimed parliament Wednesday accepted a peace plan that would deny them the independent state they have been fighting for. Delegates voted 55-12 with one abstention to approve the plan drafted by mediators Cyrus Vance of the United Nations and Lord Owen of the European Community (EC).

Bosnia's Muslims and Croats, the Serbs' foes, have tentatively accepted the proposal. Rejection by the Serbs could have escalated violence and prompted foreign military intervention in the nine-month-old conflict, in which at least 17,000 people have been killed and tens of thousands are missing.

Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic had threatened to resign if the plan were rejected. The draft plan includes boundaries drawn partly along ethnic lines and in accordance with nine constitutional principles. Serbs would have to give up their demand for a separate state within Bosnia and an eventual merger with neighboring, Serb-dominated Yugoslavia.

The international community had warned Serbs to accept the plan unconditionally or risk further isolation and possible military intervention. Earlier Wednesday, Mr. Karadzic had said "the deputies are puzzled and undecided on what they should do. By accepting the peace plan, we could lose our freedom."

Under pressure from Yugoslav leaders, Mr. Karadzic accepted the plan a week ago on condition that the Bosnian Serb Assembly

approve it.

Bosnia's Serb minority, backed initially by the Serb-dominated Yugoslav army, rebelled after the Muslim and Croat majority voted for independence last February. Serbs, who made up one-third of Bosnia's prewar population of 4.3 million, have seized 70 per cent of its territory.

The Serbs declared their own state early last year. Though their self-proclaimed parliament was granted a say on the peace proposal, the state has not been recognised by any government.

Mr. Karadzic said Tuesday that the provincial borders, some of which he said are unacceptable to Serbs, are not part of the constitutional principles and therefore subject to more negotiations. Even as the Serbs met, fighting continued across much of Bosnia. Sarajevo's old town was shelled Tuesday in a continuing siege by Serbian forces.

After four days of bitter fighting, Muslim-led government forces captured overnight a hill in eastern Bosnia from where they can control a large area on the Drina River border with Serbia. Serbs, who held the Jezero Hill near Skelani in eastern Bosnia, had to withdraw over the Drina to Serbia in what appears to be a major Muslim victory, the Belgrade-based Tanjug News Agency reported.

The Geneva conference seeking a peace settlement in Bosnia-Herzegovina is set to resume Saturday, a conference spokesman said Wednesday. The session had been pegged to agreement by the Bosnian Serb assembly to outline constitutional proposals.

"One hour ago the co-

chairman (Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen) gave instructions to Geneva for a resumption at noon on Saturday," spokesman Fred Eckhardt told reporters.

Referring to the debate at Bosnian Serb headquarters in Pale on whether to accept the proposals, he said before the formal vote: "Anything short of a 'yes' would most likely lead to cancellation of the talks and a trip to New York by the co-chairmen."

Mr. Vance and Lord Owen flew to Sarajevo after a fog delay Wednesday in a bid to broker an end to fighting between Bosnia's nominally allied Muslims and Croats.

A U.N. plane carrying Mr. Vance and Lord Owen left for Sarajevo (at 1155 GMT) from Croatia's Adriatic Port of Split after a three-hour wait for mid-winter fog to clear over the Bosnian capital, a Split Airport spokesman said.

Mr. Vance and Lord Owen originally intended to meet the chief of U.N. peacekeeping force for former Yugoslavia in Zagreb before heading to Sarajevo but their plane was diverted to Split because of fog over the Croatian capital.

They planned meetings with Croat and Muslim leaders in Sarajevo to defuse a territorial quarrel which has triggered heavy fighting in communally mixed west-central Bosnia and has almost shattered their alliance against rebel Serbs.

Bosnia's Muslim-led government Tuesday said its troops and the Croats were fighting each other with increasing bitterness, and threatened to ask the U.N. Security Council to identify the Croats as the aggressors.

Cambodian presidential election likely on April 5

PHNOM PENH, (R) — Rival

Cambodian factions have begun to accept astrologers' advice that April 5 is the most auspicious date for electing Prince Norodom Sihanouk president but continue to dispute what will happen afterwards.

A statement issued at the royal palace in Phnom Penh said Tuesday the government of Prime Minister Hun Sen had accepted April 5 as the date for presidential elections.

Prince Sihanouk, recuperating from a serious illness in Peking, said he would work to mediate between the radically leftist Khmer Rouge guerrilla group and the Hun Sen government as president to "make possible the return of the Khmer Rouge to the national community."

"There are Khmer problems and inter-Khmer problems which an elected Sihanouk can resolve to a certain extent which UNTAC (U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia), which is not Khmer, cannot resolve even partially," Prince Sihanouk said.

Relations between the Khmer Rouge and the U.N. peacekeepers have been severely strained in recent months by the guerrilla group's refusal to abide by key provisions of a peace treaty it signed in Paris in October, 1991.

Khmer Rouge guerrillas continued to hold four peacekeepers hostage in a strife-torn province and talks to free them were deadlocked, a U.N. spokesman said Tuesday.

The detention of two Britons, a Chilean and a Cambodian, was the sixth such incident involving the peacekeepers.

The Khmer Rouge has proposed that Prince Sihanouk be elected president in a national election held before a U.N.-supervised National Assembly poll slated for May.

Diplomats in Phnom Penh say the Khmer Rouge believes it will get a better deal from Prince Sihanouk than from UNTAC.

A Vietnamese invasion ousted the Khmer Rouge from power in 1979 after a reign of terror that killed a million Cambodians.

Hanoi installed the government that is now run by Mr. Hun Sen. Mr. Hun Sen's foreign minister, Hor Namhong, Monday endorsed April 5 for a presidential poll, a date Prince Sihanouk's astrologers chose because of a favourable confluence of stars.

But Mr. Hor Namhong told reporters after meeting French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas in Paris he saw no role for the Khmer Rouge after that.

He made clear he wanted the Khmer Rouge out of the power equation and urged the United Nations to re-examine UNTAC's mandate in the light of Khmer Rouge ceasefire violations. "Prince Norodom Sihanouk must be elected and, once elected by the people, he can play a decisive role to stabilise the situation and bring about national reconciliation," he said.

Prince Norodom Ranariddh, leader of Cambodia's Royalist Party, told reporters Monday he believed Prince Sihanouk, his father, would be the next president, and that the Royalist Party would win the General Assembly elections and that he would become prime minister.

Commenting on his father's health, he said: "My father's illness is much more serious than you think. It's very serious. He's not out of any danger. What happened in Peking is a mini-stroke."

He expected Prince Sihanouk to return to Cambodia within one month. Chinese doctors said he suffered from blood circulation disorders and have ordered regular exercise and a strict diet.

All four Cambodian rival factions signed the agreement that formally ended more than two decades of violence and civil war and paved the way for the deployment of UNTAC.



Night turns to day in north Italy; possibly meteorite

MILAN (R) — Night turned to day across a swathe of northern Italy when the sky was lit up by a bright glow, possibly caused by a large meteorite, for a few seconds in the early hours of Tuesday. Fire brigade and police telephone switchboards were jammed by thousands of calls reporting a bright blue or red light and a bang louder than thunder. "The light was like a very, very bright flash but it only lasted a matter of seconds," one eyewitness told Reuters. He said he saw the light around 0036 GMT. It lit the sky from Bergamo to the Adriatic town of Pescara, about 420 kilometres to the south east. An air force spokesman in Milan confirmed the phenomenon but said the cause was still unknown. "When has been reported is consistent with a meteorite or the fragment of a comet entering the atmosphere," said Mario Cordino of Milan's Brera Observatory. "But to produce the kind of event that has been reported, the meteorite or comet would have been some metres across." In Bologna and other cities, residents said the bang was so loud that it rattled windows and walls. Officials ruled out initial speculation the bright light had anything to do with fighting in former Yugoslavia, which lies just across the Adriatic.

Cabinet secretary richest in Japan's cabinet

TOKYO (R) — Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa's chief cabinet secretary is the richest man in the cabinet, Kyodo News Agency said Tuesday, estimating the real value of his personal assets at 12.4 billion yen (\$99.2 million). Kyodo said Yohji Kono owned 13 lots of commercial and residential land in Tokyo and neighbouring areas, which accounted for the largest portion of his assets. The agency ranked Mr. Miyazawa seventh-richest in the cabinet with some 730 million yen (\$5.84 million). Kyodo based its findings on a government report of the cabinet members' assets such as deposits, real estate and stocks. But it said the report only showed nominal values, which were far from the real truth. Mr. Kono only owns assets worth 1.16 billion yen (\$9.2 million) and Mr. Miyazawa 180 million yen, according to the official report published Tuesday. It said overall assets owned by Mr. Miyazawa and his 28 cabinet ministers only totalled about 3.4 billion yen (\$27.2 million). But Kyodo estimated the total value at 22.4 billion yen (\$179 million).

Only child poisons mother in row over toy

PEKING (R) — An eight-year-old only child who poisoned his mother when she refused to buy him a toy car was killed by his enraged father who then committed suicide, a regional newspaper said. The killings took place on Nov. 2 in rural Shandong province, the Jan. 9 edition of Jiangsu Legal News said. The boy, angry when his mother declined to give him an electronic toy car, laced her breakfast porridge with rat poison. On hearing his son confess to the murder, the father threw him across the room and the child died instantly, the newspaper said. The distraught man then drank liquid fertilizer and died. The newspaper blamed the tragedy on the parents spoiling their only child.

Bush out, Clinton in at Madame Tussaud's

LONDON (R) — U.S. President George Bush has not even finished packing yet but he is already in storage in a leading British wax figure museum. With a day left before he hands over to Bill Clinton, workers at Madame Tussaud's unceremoniously removed his model Tuesday. Clinton's £20,000 (\$30,880) image took his place in the museum's Grand Hall, a spokeswoman said. Artists at the museum, one of London's leading tourist attractions, worked overtime to finish the model in time for the inauguration in Washington Wednesday. Mr. Clinton was not able to sit for the model, which was sculptured from photographs, but he will receive pictures and an invitation to visit the museum, the spokeswoman said. As for Mr. Bush, whose model was removed as tensions escalated in the Gulf, he may return to the display if history is kind, she added.

Rebels target vital Angolan oil industry

LUANDA (R) — UNITA rebels, having captured most of Angola's northern diamond area, have struck a blow against the country's vital oil industry, lifeline of the government they are battling.

On Tuesday the rebels claimed they had captured the important oil town of Soyo, in the north-west, while the government admitted that it had lost contact with its forces there.

Portuguese nationals among the scores of foreigners evacuated from Soyo to Luanda after two days of intense fighting said UNITA appeared to be in control of the mainly offshore northwestern oil town, which accounts for about one-third of the country's over 500,000 barrels per day (BPD) production.

"The oil city of Soyo fell to UNITA hands today at 11.40 a.m.," said a UNITA communi-

que faxed to Reuters in Lisbon on Tuesday night. "Many foreigners, most of them Portuguese, were captured."

A senior general in the Angolan armed forces, Higino Carneiro, told Reuters government troops had been in control of Soyo until late afternoon, when armed forces commanders lost communications with Soyo.

"The situation is very grave," he said. "Whether we lost contact because of technical problems or because UNITA overran Soyo we still don't know."

Soyo is second to Cabinda, further to the north, in producing oil. Angola's main export which accounts for some 90 per cent of revenue. Soyo is vulnerable because much of its offshore oil is bunkered onshore.

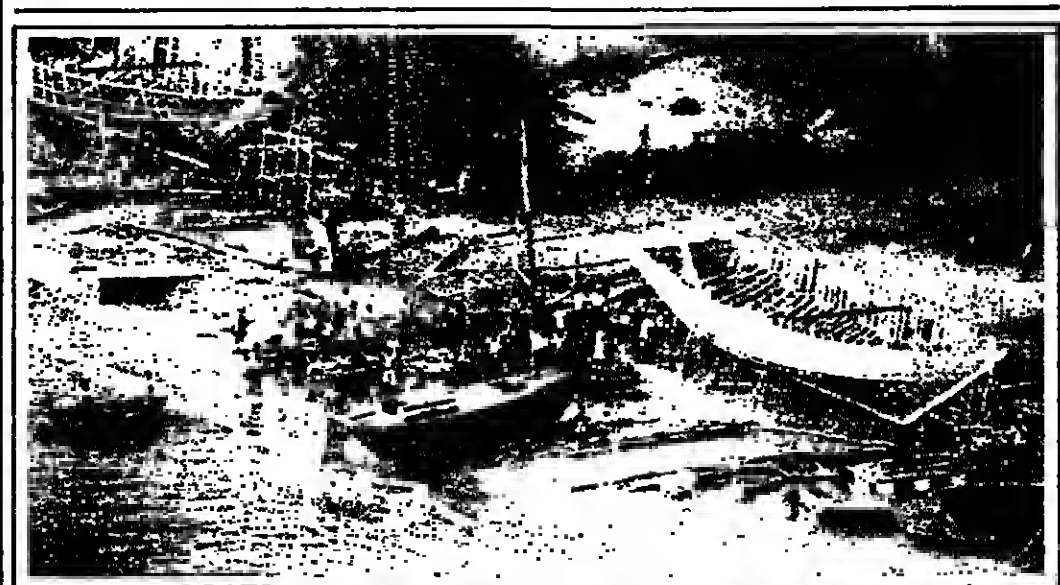
UNITA has already seized most of the country's northern diamond mining areas and such

an attack against the oil industry would be a big economic and psychological blow, diplomats said.

Oil officials said they were joined by the ease with which UNITA had attacked Soyo and expressed concern about the implications for Cabinda, which is guarded by thousands of troops.

"Everyone in the oil industry was surprised by how quickly the situation developed," said one official of Fina Petroleos Angola.

Fighting Tuesday also intensified around Angola's second city of Huambo, UNITA's headquarters in the central highlands. The government claimed UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) had sent in thousands of reinforcements and diplomats said it appeared that rebels pounding the shattered city with artillery had the upper hand.



REFUGEE BOATS: Two frames of wooden boats sit on the shore of a small fishing village as village people gather around a sailboat on La Tortue, a small Haitian island off the north coast of the mainland. Some 200 wooden boats reportedly are being built in Haiti. The U.S. has deployed several sea vessels around Haiti in an effort to prevent any refugee boats from leaving the country (AFP photo)

portedly are being built in Haiti. The U.S. has deployed several sea vessels around Haiti in an effort to prevent any refugee boats from leaving the country (AFP photo)

Miyazawa faces rough legislative session

TOKYO (R) — A royal wedding and a glittering diplomatic summit could give Kiichi Miyazawa the boost he needs to win a second term as Japan's prime minister and assure the ruling party of an election triumph, according to political analysts.

But before the champagne flows for the crown prince's wedding, expected in June, and the Tokyo summit in July, Miyazawa must survive a perilous 150-day parliamentary session opening Friday, where three big hurdles await him.

If Miyazawa clears those hurdles, pundits say, he will be virtually assured of re-election as president of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in September. The post carries with it the prime ministership because of the LDP's majority in parliament.

Soon after the internal party ballot, Mr. Miyazawa is widely expected to call general elections. The four-year term of the current lower house expires in February 1994.

"His main rival, Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe, has already said he would support Mr.

Miyazawa's re-election," said Tadashi Iyasa, a professor of politics at Ryukoku University and a specialist on LDP affairs.

"There is no sign that his low popularity (in opinion polls) is hurting Miyazawa's political stature or that the ratings will get worse," Mr. Iyasa said. A recent poll by the daily Mainichi Shimbun showed his popularity sinking to just 12 per cent, the second-lowest for a post-war prime minister.

Mr. Miyazawa's first task when parliament convenes is finally to lay to rest the devastating Sagawa money-and-mobsters scandal, which late last year rocked the LDP leadership and drove public cynicism to a new high.

The Socialists have proved an ineffectual opposition party, but under new Chairman Sadao Yamahana they could revive attempts to drive Noboru Takeshita, the tainted former prime minister, into retirement.

Mr. Takeshita's ally, Shin Kanemaru, long the ruling party's "kingmaker," has already been forced to quit over the affair. But Mr. Takeshita himself has refused to go, denying allegations

he used gangsters to put down an ultra-nationalist smear campaign against him and smooth his 1987 rise to the prime minister's position.

Mr. Miyazawa's second task in parliament will be to oversee smooth passage of the 1993-94 state budget, the first drafted under his leadership. The bill includes key pump-priming measures to pull Japan's slowing economy out of the doldrums.

If all goes well, the budget will pass in late March, in time for the start of the new fiscal year on April 1.

Once this considerable hurdle has been cleared, Mr. Miyazawa has committed himself to pushing through legislation to reform the country's money-churning electoral system and impose stricter laws on political funding.

The LDP, in unbroken power since 1955, blames the system for a spate of ugly scandals that have eroded its voter support.

"This year we must go further (along the path of political reform)," Mr. Miyazawa told a party convention Wednesday.

"This includes making political

donations more transparent and holding election campaigns that don't require large amounts of money."

Commentators doubt this heavy parliamentary agenda can be handled without hitch. They see two "clouds of uncertainty."

The first is new U.S. President Bill Clinton's likely trade offensive against Japan," Mr. Iyasa said.

"An agreement between Europe and the United States in the Uruguay round (of global trade talks) would force Japan to open up its rice market. That would be catastrophic for the LDP's rural vote but would not be blamed on Miyazawa," he said.

Another destabilising factor for Mr. Miyazawa is the feverish political atmosphere. There has been talk of drastic party realignments that could give the electorate, for the first time in four decades, a viable alternative to the LDP.

It has threatened to break away, robbing the LDP of its majority in parliament.

"But Ozawa's men are the ones who benefited most during the long years of LDP rule," said Rei Shiratori, dean of political studies at Tokai University. "I don't see such a drastic move."

If he makes it safely through this parliamentary minefield, Mr. Miyazawa may then be able to take advantage of the summer's two glamour events to prolong his career.

The wedding of Crown Prince Naruhito to former diplomat Masako Owada will oblige the opposition to halt active politicking for the duration of the festivities.

A similar truce will take effect before the Tokyo summit of leading industrialised countries from July 7 to 9, pundits say.